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Fictions of Consumption: Novels of the Long Eighteenth Century, 1749-1817

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Declaration:

This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work.

No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Signed:

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Abstract

This project relates the theme of material consumption in novels of the long eighteenth century to the development of the novel genre. Functioning as more than just a reflection of societal concerns, novels shape perceptions of consumption, which in turn inform our understanding of the novel's development. These perceptions are informed and complicated by a variety of issues presented in eighteenth-century novels including form, nation and national identity, sexuality, labour, commerce, credit and debt, and, in particular, gender.

Chapter one looks at Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and the use of consumption imagery and metaphors as a way of playing with form and genre adaptation; the novel's awareness of its own status as consumable commodity relates to the metaphoric and physical consumption within the novel's plot, establishing a relationship between the problematic generic status of *Tom Jones* and the theme of physical consumption. Through Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, chapter two examines eighteenth-century concerns regarding women's consumption through the largely neglected figure of Tabitha Bramble and her reclamation of the corrupting influence of the foreign through her marriage to Lismahago. More than just a critique of the effects of foreign luxury on British society, I argue that *Humphry Clinker* makes room for the produce of empire through the union of Tabitha and Lismahago. Chapter three analyses Frances Burney's novel *Camilla* in relation to its treatment of the commodifying effects of commerce, particularly shopping; drawing parallels between the experience of shopping in the eighteenth century and the marriage market, specifically as relates to the male gaze, the chapter argues that there is a connection between the novel as commodity, created by Burney in order to create profit, and the commodification of *Camilla* through the male gaze. Chapter four discusses the ways in which Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *The Absentee* utilise Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* as a roadmap for Irish economic and social development but argues that this is problematised through the absence of politics in Smith, which inadvertently complicates Edgeworth's message of economic

advancement. In chapter five, Frances Burney's *The Wanderer* continues the Smithian analysis begun in chapter four. The chapter argues that Burney amplifies and adapts Smith's ambivalent representation of consumption, in the process discussing the ways in which Smith presents the value of labour and issues of debt, ultimately suggesting that Burney comes to challenge some of the conclusions Smith draws regarding "value." The final chapter looks at Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* in relation to Smith's Enlightenment theory of stadial history, arguing that in *Rob Roy* Scott challenges the expected historical progression presented in *Waverley* to the point that the whole theory is questioned and ultimately interrogates Smith's founding principle that commercial society is the pinnacle of human civilisation.

Through the project's division between pre- and post-Smithian texts, issues of consumption highlight and explain the conflict between civic humanism and Smithian political economy; novels shift over time from representing consumption within a moral framework to one with a wider economic focus.

Introduction

I.

With the publication of *The Birth of a Consumer Society* in 1982, Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb significantly opened up the study of material consumption in the eighteenth century. An unequivocally influential study, McKendrick asserts that there was a consumer revolution in the eighteenth century leading to the commercialisation of society, signified by a distinct shift in the way in which people consumed (1); the ability to consume reached more people (2) and as a result “[m]en, and in particular women, bought as never before” (9) simply because they could. Levels of consumption increased through all ranks of society (27) and created anxiety particularly among the aristocracy and gentry who felt “threatened by the loss of their distinctive badge of identity” (55), that is, their ability to consume and set themselves apart through what they consumed. This increased demand was, according to McKendrick, “the necessary analogue to the industrial revolution, the necessary convulsion on the demand side of the equation to match the convulsion on the supply side” (9). Consumption, or consumer demand, clearly becomes key in driving Britain’s production forward and is both the cause and effect of growing imperial trade. Rather than focusing on production, as was previously so often the case when discussing political economy in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, McKendrick, Brewer, and Plumb turn the focus on consumption, utilising the buying habits of individuals to comment on British society as a whole as well as historical trends and events. Building on the theories of Thorstein Veblen, McKendrick makes clear that consumption became a significant social force with the issue of emulation at the forefront of social shifts as well as the source of widespread anxieties. For McKendrick the drive to emulate social betters increased as goods became cheaper and lower ranks gained greater access to what had once been luxury items (11); this in turn spurred people on to greater and more elaborate displays of consumption, often in the form of clothing, appearance, household goods, and leisure activities:

These characteristics – the closely stratified nature of English society, the striving for vertical social mobility, the emulative spending bred by social emulation, the compulsive power of fashion begotten by social competition – combined with the widespread ability to spend (offered by novel levels of prosperity) to produce an unprecedented propensity to consume:

unprecedented in the depth to which it penetrated the lower reaches of society and unprecedented in its impact on the economy. (McKendrick 11)

This boom in consumption and the overarching “acceptance of commercial attitudes” (13) is what leads McKendrick to conclude that “the first of the world’s consumer societies had unmistakably emerged by 1800” (13).

The absence of literature within the historical and cultural approach taken in *The Birth of a Consumer Society* begs the question of how literature of the era deals with, adopts, and complicates issues delineated by McKendrick. Given that the novel genre developed in the same period as McKendrick’s “consumer revolution” and novels quickly became new commodities, it follows that there is a connection between the novel’s development, the ways novels treat consumption, and the ways in which those approaches shift over time. This project looks at the ways in which perceptions of the conspicuous material consumption delineated by McKendrick and others are shaped by novels of the long eighteenth century and the ways in which categories of consumption help us understand the ways novels work as novels. More specifically, the first half of this project looks at how novels use consumption pre-*Wealth of Nations* with a focus on civic humanism while the second half looks at novels that utilise a Smithian political economy, which in turn helps to explain the conflict between these two theories; this “conflict” is implicit in the genre’s formulation and treatment of consumption. Out of this rather broad banner of “consumption” arise complications and complexities, including questions of form, gender, nation, politics, and commerce that this project intends to address. In analysing the ways in which novels by Henry Fielding, Tobias Smollett, Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Sir Walter Scott use material and metaphorical consumption, we encounter not only a broad swathe of temporal and geographical space, but a demonstration of the development of the novel as a genre. Novels are but one example of the increasing number of goods produced and consumed throughout the long eighteenth century; as the genre develops so do issues surrounding its consumption and the social consumption reflected within it. Through looking at novelistic representations of consumption and the wide variety of issues inherent to the subject, we come to a better understanding of the genre’s development and ways in which novels complicate understandings of consumption.

Present throughout eighteenth-century debates about consumption and in the novelistic reflections of these concerns is the complicating factor of gender. The growing number of women writing and reading novels in the eighteenth century as well as the overwhelming social conviction that women's consumption in particular was a problem makes gender a focal point of this project. The issue of display inherent to conspicuous consumption as well as the necessary interaction with the commercial world in order to consume makes consumption a bridge for women between the private domestic realm and the public commercial and political sphere; whether this is beneficial or detrimental for individual women or society at large is of course a source of debate with which this project interacts.

The Birth of a Consumer Society opened up not only consumption-specific studies, but also added another dimension to eighteenth-century historical work. As eighteenth-century Britain's trade expanded and imperial commercial interests became more prevalent and firmly established, access to luxury items became more commonplace; the perception of what were regarded as "luxury" items shifted with their greater availability, as McKendrick makes clear: "[a]s a result [of increased consumption] 'luxuries' came to be seen as mere 'decencies', and 'decencies' came to be seen as 'necessities'. Even 'necessities' underwent a dramatic metamorphosis in style, variety and availability" (1). For example, sugar and tea were two commodities formerly only accessible to the wealthy but by the end of the eighteenth century were readily available to most households regardless of income. Tea was first imported to Britain in the first decade of the eighteenth century and by the 1790s it was said to be a universal drink (P. Marshall 80). During the course of the eighteenth century, "the per capita consumption of tea increased fifteenfold" (McKendrick 29) to the point that some expressed worries (that ultimately proved true) that tea would supplant beer and ale as the national drink (Drummond and Wilbraham 204). Like tea, sugar production and importation increased as colonial holdings in the West Indies became more extensive (Drummond and Wilbraham 205), resulting in easier access to sugarcane and its byproducts, namely rum, molasses, and sugar (Tannahill 263, 296).¹ Sugar consumption in the eighteenth century exploded, growing from four pounds per year per capita in 1700 to eighteen pounds per year per capita in the first decade of the nineteenth century (Cowan 219); "Sugar had been transformed from an elite luxury

¹ For a more detailed discussion of the early-modern/early imperial sugar industry see Richard Dunn's

condiment that graced the tables of Renaissance princes to an everyday sweetener that was used as a supplement, and increasingly to replace, the staple foods of commoners” (Cowan 219). Sugar, like tea, loses its status as a luxury item through the course of the eighteenth century, and though anxiety about the consumption by the lower ranks of items such as these eventually wanes, it makes for considerable anxiety in the meantime.

These commodities are not simply items for consumption, however. They are additionally laden with the source of their colonial origin, carrying an inherent connotation of the exploitation of slaves and manipulation of economic superiority (see chapter four of Sussman, “Women and the Politics of Sugar”; Kowaleski-Wallace *Consuming Subjects* 47; Coleman’s “Conspicuous Consumption”). The service of tea was similarly rich in ulterior meaning. According to McKendrick, china designs by Josiah Wedgwood are emblematic of mid-eighteenth-century fashion crazes and the lengths to which women specifically would go to adhere to perceived fashions, as seen for instance in the black teapots Wedgwood created to cater to the craze of women bleaching their hands with arsenic; through the black contrast of the teapot, Wedgwood’s design highlighted the whiteness of his patrons’ hands (McKendrick 113). McKendrick does not, however, explore the idea that the black teapots caused rather than resulted from the fashion for bleached hands. More importantly, Wedgwood’s designs also represent the increase in consumerism and consumer-driven demand. Wedgwood built special display rooms “to beguile the fashionable company” and make the showrooms more attractive to ladies (McKendrick 111); these innovations were a harbinger of shopping as a leisure activity. As women came to be more closely associated with the consumption of tea – due in part to the fashionability established by Wedgwood – the tea table came to be seen as an increasingly feminised space (Kowaleski-Wallace *Consuming Subjects* 25; Sussman 27-28; Harvey 206) and a place of feminine dominance (Harvey 210). As Beth Kowaleski-Wallace points out in *Consuming Subjects*: “Like other imported commodities – silk, tea, and cotton – china drew the female consumer into a national debate about the debilitating effects of a home economy indebted to foreign trade. [...] Because women were stereotypically identified as the principal consumers of such imported products, they most often bore the brunt of an antimercantist polemic” (58). But though women were to a degree unduly pressured to change their consumption habits because of the potential impact on the national economy,

thus essentially acknowledging their political power, they were still denied overt access to political participation. However, as Charlotte Sussman points out in *Consuming Anxieties*, boycotts of commodities like sugar “provided a political forum open to women” when they would otherwise have no political access (23). Women involved in the abolition movement used the space of the tea table as a venue through which to assert their moral stance through not serving sugar with their tea (see Sussman, particularly chapters one and six, “Colonialism and the Politics of Consumerism” and “Overseeing Violence – Sentimental Vision and Slave Labor,” respectively), and though these gestures had little direct influence on the national scale, they asserted significant power in the domestic realm. In this brief overview of two relatively novel eighteenth-century commodities we see a rich undercurrent of the impact of consumption and the multiple significations present.

II.

Though the importance of *The Birth of a Consumer Society* within the study of eighteenth-century consumption is undisputed, there are many avenues of disagreement that opened up as a result of the study, leading to more specific areas of research and discovery regarding consumption. Several weighty studies and anthologies followed *The Birth of a Consumer Society*² including John Styles and Amanda Vickery’s *Gender, Taste, and Material Culture*, whose introduction debates the accuracy of the degree to which McKendrick proposes consumption shifted, questioning how much material life was transformed as well as the legitimacy of calling this shift a “revolution” (1). They additionally question the accuracy of focusing on the eighteenth century as the locus of consumerist expansion: “Neil McKendrick’s idea that the late eighteenth century saw the emergence of a consumer society has been rejected in favor of a depiction of slow expansion in consumption and retailing over many centuries (certainly beginning before the mid-seventeenth century)” (151); the issue of dating is similarly taken up by Jean-Christophe Agnew, who argues that debates about the rise of consumer culture stem from a “much earlier debate over the origins of industrial capitalism in the west [...]” (23). Edward Copeland

² *Consumption and the World of Goods* edited by John Brewer and Roy Porter, *The Consumption of Culture* edited by Ann Bermingham and John Brewer, *Luxury in the Eighteenth Century: Debates, Desires, and Delectables* edited by Maxine Berg and Elizabeth Eger, and Maxine Berg’s *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

suggests that “[w]e now know that the concept of ‘revolution’ in the eighteenth-century economy – industrial or consumer – is a dubious assumption” (7).

Emulation is the key motivation posited by McKendrick as to why there was a substantial increase in consumption: “Spurred on by social emulation and class competition, men and women surrendered eagerly to the pursuit of novelty, the hypnotic effects of fashion, and the enticements of persuasive commercial propaganda. As a result many objects, once the prized possessions of the rich, reached further than ever before down the social scale” (McKendrick 11). Many have come to debate the accuracy of McKendrick’s emphasis on emulation, yet somewhat surprisingly, given the number of disagreements shared by Vickery and Styles with McKendrick’s work in their introduction, Vickery does not entirely disagree with McKendrick on emulation and conspicuous consumption in her earlier chapter in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, saying rather that they have their place in certain circumstances but are not always applicable – they are “one vocabulary among many” (294); consumption studies have, however, generally moved away from emulation as motivation. Sussman does not question the existence of a consumer revolution of sorts, but does question whether it was motivated by emulation (45). In *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* Colin Campbell questions the issue of motivation behind the supposed emulation, arguing that “no good reason is given to explain why people should have become more actively emulative at this time” (34). In *Consumption and the World of Goods* Campbell writes that “the prevailing assumption has been that particular sections of the population of England revised their consumption patterns at this time as a consequence of a new willingness to give expression to their desire to be regarded as equal in social standing to those who were their acknowledged social superiors” (40). He goes on to argue that this thesis is “unproven” (40) because 1) ownership of goods does not indicate a desire to be like someone else who owns that particular item, rather it only shows a “trickle-down” process rather than an imitative ambition (40); 2) imitative behaviour is not necessarily indicative of emulation (40-41); and 3) “emulation is more of an intention than a motive” (41), and even if consumption stems from emulation, the exact motives are still unknown and herein lies the problem with this accepted standard approach: one cannot know the intentions of consumption without knowing the motivation, which is very difficult to discern (43). Copeland makes the important distinction between

emulation and “fashion,” which “emerges in the last quarter of the century as a certain attraction for women of the middling ranks: in fiction as a focus of comic revelation [...] and the *Lady's Magazine* [...] as a focus of monthly temptations” (3). For Copeland, then, fashion rather than emulation was the social sore spot.

Another issue stemming from McKendrick's study which has led to bountiful discussion is the role of women in eighteenth-century consumption. McKendrick notes that women in particular, “bought as never before” (9). People in the eighteenth century, specifically men, were concerned that women's (alleged) profligate spending would send the country into moral decline, and many scholars have focused on women's consumption as a result. Vickery writes in “Women and the World of Goods”:

[Thorstein] Veblen's damning portrait of the leisured lady consumer has, for most social, economic and women's historians, adequately delineated the elite woman's role in the world of goods. The lady of the leisure class played a crucial role in the performance of conspicuous leisure. Innocent of paid employment, she was ultimate testimony to her husband's wealth and status, the clothes on her back the tangible proof of his purchasing power. Her unpaid work, the ‘painstaking attention to the service of the master’ and ‘the maintenance and elaboration of the household paraphernalia’ was a category of leisure, since these tasks were ‘unproductive’ [Veblen 54]. In short, the leisured lady's economic *raison d'être* was to consume and display what men produced, thereby driving her less fortunate sisters to new heights of envious imitation. (276)

Unlike those mentioned above, Vickery does not seem to take issue with the theory of emulation but she does question the extent to which upper class women were focused on as conspicuous consumers. Deirdre Coleman comments in “Conspicuous Consumption” on women's “close association” with luxury (341); it is not so much that critics debate whether or not women were targeted as the main consumers and drivers of the “consumer revolution” as it is that they debate the extent to which this is historically true. Kathleen Wilson writes in *The Island Race* that “[i]n the 1740s and 1750s, women were seen as both emblematic and symptomatic of the forces of dangerous luxury and degeneration that threatened to overtake the national polity, and women were accordingly urged to curtail their ‘natural’ inclinations towards fripperies and emotionalism for the greater national good” (19). Overt references to women's consumption affecting the nation and its well-being occur frequently. Nandini Bhattacharya writes in *Reading the Splendid Body*

that “[...] luxury and consumerism ineluctably led to a feminization and weakening of national virtue and culture” (88) because of the seemingly inherent association with women and excessive consumption.³

Many argue that this focus on women’s consumption led to an unfair demonisation of the female consumer and an unquestioned acceptance of women’s alleged excessive consumption. As Laura Brown writes in “Reading Race and Gender: Jonathan Swift,” “[i]t is only one quick step from the equation of women and commodities to an attack on the hypocritical female as the embodiment of cultural corruption, the visceral epitome of the alienating effects of commodification and the disorienting social consequences of capitalist accumulation” (430). Vickery’s works attempt to reclaim the female consumer from the unfair position in which she has been placed. Vickery criticises most historians for their easy dismissal of women’s consumption: “[Lorna] Weatherill apart, historians have dismissed women’s dealings with material things as a category of leisure, domestic material culture as an arena of female vanity, not skill, and shopping a degraded female hobby, not unpaid work” (“Women and the World of Goods” 277). She criticises McKendrick and one of his main sources, Thorstein Veblen, as well as Campbell in particular, saying, “Campbell reinforces the old notion that women were in the forefront of the alleged consumer revolution, that their desire to consume is somehow greater than men’s but gives little clue as to why that might be the case. Unfortunately, we are left with the assumption that women are simply innately covetous and congenitally wistful about the prospect of upward mobility” (“Women and the World of Goods” 277). Some of the work of the more overtly feminist scholars tends to criticise the cultural assumptions of other current scholars regarding women’s inherent proclivity to consume; much of their scholarship is an effort to illuminate not only historical patterns of consumption but to combat further stereotyping of women, both historically and in the present.

Margot Finn counters the focus on women’s consumption in “Men’s Things: Masculine Possession in the Consumer Revolution” suggesting that men, perhaps more so than women, were

³ There has been a good deal of work done on the effects of consumption in the colonies and the perceived taint brought back to Britain when colonialists return. As well as Bhattacharya and Wilson, see T.H. Breen’s “The Meaning of Things” in *Consumption and the World of Goods* and “An Empire of Goods: The Anglicization of Colonial America”; Tillman Nechtman’s “Nabobinas: Luxury, Gender, and the Sexual Politics of British Imperialism”; James Bunn’s “The Aesthetics of British Mercantilism”; Troy Bickham’s “Eating the Empire.”

consumers of luxury items.⁴ Rather than finding the focus on women unwarranted, Finn finds the general acknowledgment of women as a driving force behind industrial production “refreshing and salutary” (134) as it demonstrates women’s empowerment through commercial interaction. However, she also notes that, “as the burgeoning literature on women and possession has come to outpace research on male activity in the consumer market, the very richness of this body of scholarship has tended to promote the assumption that ‘the sex of things’ is predominantly female, that the history of gender and consumption in the modern period is primarily a history of women’s experiences” (Finn 134), while the consumer experiences of men have been largely ignored. Finn argues that, while men’s purchases of luxury items, particularly associated with horses and their equipage, were made less frequently, they were on the whole more expensive and less necessary than the purchases made by women that were primarily done on account of the entire household. Vickery makes a similar point:

However, while men bought luxuries for themselves and certain commodities for the household and the dynasty, it was still women who were principally identified with spending in the eighteenth-century imagination. In all probability, the stereotypical distinction between the producing man and the consuming woman was endorsed by the visibility and regularity of female shopping, whereas the male consumer escaped general notice because his direct engagement with the market was only intermittent. (“Women and the World of Goods” 281)

Styles and Vickery state in their introduction, “Business records confirm that men dominated the purchase of high-status, expensive luxury goods” (7), and later that “[t]he satirists may have believed that female consumers were spending a fortune on shiny gee-gaws, but shop ledgers do not bear this out” either because a woman could make purchases in her husband’s name, or because she simply did not make them (8). The idea of women’s reckless and unfettered consumption is also challenged by Styles and Vickery in that,

[v]irtuous women, by making consumer choices that were moderate and reasonable, could moralize consumer society, protecting it from its own depravity. [...] Their struggle to exercise good taste became a struggle to arrive at material choices that were socially appropriate, avoiding those that were unseemly. This was a discourse of self-restraint and occasionally anxiety, far removed from the uninhibited hedonism that historians have sometimes associated with an eighteenth-century consumer revolution. (16)

⁴ Karen Harvey makes a similar point regarding misconceptions of male contributions to the creation of a domestic ideal in “Men Making Home: Masculinity and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century Britain.” Vickery expands on the role of male consumers as “characteristically occasional and impulsive, or expensive and dynastic” (16) in “His and Hers: Gender, Consumption and Household Accounting in Eighteenth-Century England.”

Women were just as anxious about the portrayal of their consumption as men were with their perceptions of women's consumption. A woman seen as an excessive consumer could earn herself a reputation that would ultimately limit either her marriage prospects or her social ambition. As Finn has pointed out, and as will be looked at more thoroughly in chapter five, there is a connection made by literary commentators "on the perceived nexus between sexual restraint and economic probity, conflating feminine chastity with virtuous credit dealings and equating lapses in female propriety with financial insolvency" (*Character* 12). Gillian Skinner similarly notes: "[...] in much eighteenth-century writing it is possible to discern an inherent identification of the woman who either chooses or is forced to be financially independent with the sexually immoral woman" (38). A woman's reputation was a vitally important commodity that could make or break her financial prospects; a prospective spouse could be turned off by any hint of indiscretion or loose morals, which could be indicated, symbolically or not, through consuming excessively (Wilson 138).

Women came to symbolise various objects associated with consumption which served as further means of dehumanising the female consumer and vilifying her perceived actions. Brown argues that literature of the eighteenth century came to metonymically equate women and the empire through the imperial adornments women wore:

Thus, in the literature of mercantile capitalist apologia and even more broadly in the representation of women in general in the early eighteenth century, the richly adorned female figure is identified first of all with the products of trade and prosperity, and then with the whole male enterprise of commerce that generates those commodities. [...] The activities and motives of the male adventurers and profiteers, and the systematic dimensions of imperialist expansion disappear behind the figure of the woman; in effect, because women wear the products of accumulation, they are by metonymy made to bear responsibility for the system by which they are adorned. (429)

Though, as Brown points out, the woman wears objects gained through man's enterprise, she is still held responsible for any moral, economic, and social implications of the object's attainment even though she has no direct influence on the initial action of plucking the object from its colonial setting. The other side of this discussion is that women's desire for imperial objects further drove imperial expansion, and they are not the innocent bystanders Brown makes them out to be. As previously mentioned, Kowaleski-Wallace discusses how women's associations with particular objects led to the cultural feminisation of

those objects – tea, sugar, and china in particular; Kowaleski-Wallace uses the ritual of serving tea as a means of illuminating the paradox of women as consumers and, as will be debated in chapters three and five, women as consumed by the male gaze. Distinct manipulation of the body and of the service of tea was a means not only of control, but of inviting the male gaze onto the female body – this manipulation further invited direct associations between women and tea where one came to symbolise the other (*Consuming Subjects* 25). As previously noted, recognition of the horrific conditions of Caribbean slaves on sugar plantations led many women to boycott sugar as a means of protest. Though, as Kowaleski-Wallace points out, this abstinence was sometimes a fashion statement, it was also a display of women's ability to control their supposedly unrestrained appetite for sugar and other luxuries (50). As Coleman points out, consumption rhetoric employed by abolitionists focused on equating the consumption of sugar with consuming the flesh of slaves; because of their close association with sugar, this cannibalistic imagery reflected directly on women and further scapegoated female consumers as willing consumers of enslaved flesh (Coleman 352). Coleman, along with Brown, and Laura Mandell in "Bawds and Merchants," acknowledges that "the association of women with brutal colonization and with the leisured consumption of luxury imports is, of course, well established by the end of the eighteenth century" (Coleman 344). Associations between female consumers and the things/people they consume abound to the extent that women take on negative connotations of consumption in all its various forms. Women consumers are broken down into parts and become defined solely by what they consume – china, tea, sugar, imperial imports, foreign luxuries, and the empire itself.

III.

McKendrick uses conspicuous consumption as a way of reading and interpreting eighteenth-century British culture, but conspicuous consumption has a history of its own. McKendrick's work is based in part on Veblen's *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899) though he does not interact significantly with Veblen's work, only citing the "Veblen effect" when discussing emulative consumption. In his work, Veblen traces the "origin and nature" of the leisure class and the simultaneous growth in individual ownership (22) which gradually arose out of the succession of the barbarian, predatory, quasi-peaceable industry, and peaceable industry stages of civilisation. Veblen delineates the progression of property

ownership which started with the taking of trophies in the predatory stage, most notably the taking of women which eventually became a kind of “ownership-marriage” (23) where the “wife” gradually comes to serve as a marker of the master’s reputability despite her status as a vicarious consumer (83). Veblen indicates the distinction between master and servant through the distinction between vicarious leisure and consumption and direct leisure and consumption. The primary distinction between the master and those who serve him is that of labour – the master does not perform labour, and in later stages of civilisation and increased leisure, the master does not even give the appearance of having ever laboured, while in earlier stages this appearance is still visible and not seen as disreputable. Abstention from labour becomes a mark of reputability, likewise “productive labor is a mark of poverty and subjection” and does not coincide with reputability (38). “From this point [the transition from the predatory to the quasi-peaceable industry stage] on, the characteristic feature of leisure-class life is a conspicuous exemption from all useful employment” (40). Productive labour is left to menial servants and those in non-leisured ranks. Though Roger Mason argues that John Rae predates Veblen in his observations of conspicuous consumption (22-23), Veblen is generally credited with coining the term “conspicuous consumption,” that is, visible evidence of wealth, made visible with the purpose of being observed (Veblen 36). Gordon Vichert’s analysis of Veblen’s theory suggests that the dilemma of the eighteenth century was a conflict between wanting an increase in frugality – a curbing of consumption of products from foreign nations and a cutting back on trade in general, and an increase in trade – or an increase in trade and conspicuous consumption (256). The term, “conspicuous consumption,” retroactively applied to the eighteenth century, provides an apt description of the way in which the mid- to late-eighteenth-century aristocracy in particular went to great lengths to distinguish their wealth and rank through their consumption habits.

Key to Veblen’s, and later McKendrick’s, theory is the element of emulation: “The motive that lies at the root of ownership is emulation; and the same motive of emulation continues active in the further development of the institution to which it has given rise and in the development of all those features of the social structure which this institution of ownership touches” (Veblen 25-26). Veblen refers to this at times as an “invidious comparison”; the definition he gives states, “[a]n invidious comparison is a process of valuation of persons in respect of worth” and “describes a comparison of personae with a view to rating

and grading them in respect of relative worth or value – in an aesthetic or moral sense [...]” (34). As Veblen makes clear, “[a]mong the motives which lead men to accumulate wealth, the primacy, both in scope and intensity, therefore, continues to belong to this motive of pecuniary emulation” (34). The problem of course, as McKendrick also outlines, is the spurring on of consumption motivated by this invidious comparison. As one standard of ownership becomes consistent, another higher level rises to take its place and the whole emulation process begins again (Veblen 27).

The issue of ownership is a significant one, as it is, according to Veblen, a catalyst for the emergence of the leisure class (22). The lack of individual ownership in more “savage” societies meant that there was neither a leisured class nor a great deal of emulation, much less emulative expenditure: in the primitive phase “the efficiency of the individual can be shown chiefly and most consistently in some employment that goes to further the life of the group. What emulation of an economic kind there is between the members of such a group will be chiefly emulation in industrial serviceability” (16). The serviceability is a reflection of utility rather than motivated by social gain or jealousy. In the more primitive societies that Veblen discusses, particularly regarding the roots of the emergence of leisured society, ownership of property often refers to booty and goods (16-17) as well as women (23) as opposed to land, which comes later in civilisation’s progression.

The idea of conspicuous consumption predates Veblen, however. In *Politics, Language and Time and Virtue, Commerce and History* J.G.A. Pocock outlines the ideology of classical civic humanism which asserts that mobile property associated with commercial society, as opposed to property in the form of land, leads to the “corruption” of the individual citizen; possessors of mobile property are dependent on their exchange relationships with other men rather than maintaining their independence through an income based on their land (“Civic Humanism” 92; “Mobile Property” 109). With the increase of commercial influence on British society, the increase in merchants and mercantile exchange, a business whose very nature renders its participants dependent rather than autonomous, and a general increasing social dependence on trade and fashionable goods comes the increasing threat of the corruption of political civic duty. According to civic humanism, the stability of property in the form of land makes landed gentleman more apt social and political leaders because of the independence from government and other potential

influences their land grants them; merchants, in their reliance on moveable commercial property are less stable and therefore less reliable in pursuing the good of the collective. In *Luxury: The Concept in Western Thought from Eden to Smollett* John Sekora outlines civic humanist concerns through examining the history of luxury and thus the perceived effects of conspicuous consumption. As Sekora suggests, “the concept of luxury is one of the oldest, most important, and most pervasive negative principles for organizing society Western history has known” (1-2), and “it is arguable that luxury was the single most significant social and political idea of eighteenth-century England” (9). However, as Copeland suggests, in light of the extraordinary wealth accumulated by some of middling rank, “Sekora’s traditional concept of ‘luxury’ seemed oddly irrelevant” (21). Condemnation of luxury was, nevertheless, widespread and prevalent throughout the majority of the eighteenth century:

For the first three-quarters of the century there are probably fewer arguments in support of luxury than there are defenses of deism or greater democracy. Traditional condemnations were so widely accepted during most of the century that few writers were bold enough to meet them frontally. For writers in every field – with the partial exception of political economy – the classical attack upon luxury amounted to precious orthodoxy. (Sekora 111)

Myriad authors contributed to the condemnation of luxuries, their importation, their consumption, and the effects they purportedly had on individuals and society in a variety of manifestations. The corrupting effects of luxury on the individual and society, as expressed by the texts Sekora examines, show the same anxieties as civic humanist concerns regarding the corrupting effects of conspicuous consumption of commercial goods as observed by Pocock.

In contrast to the civic humanist antipathy for the effects of conspicuous consumption and luxury goods on the political individual, Adam Smith’s 1776 *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, influenced by the likes of Bernard Mandeville and David Hume, sees consumption as an economic boon ultimately leading to greater social affluence and benefit. His treatise is perhaps most famous for advocating a system of free trade and government non-interference. Smith’s theory argues that allowing the commercial marketplace unrestricted freedom will, in the end, bring greater wealth and prosperity to the nation as a whole and greater social advancement. As Ryan Patrick Hanley points out, two of the benefits Smith saw in commercial society were: “first, commercial society’s relief of poverty through the increases it makes possible in the material welfare of all; and second, commercial society’s

promotion of freedom by substituting interdependence for the direct dependence characteristic of social relations in earlier political and economic orders” (15). The overriding good of commercial society for Smith, as Hanley points out, “is its capacity to provide for the poor” (18). According to Nicholas Phillipson, *The Wealth of Nations* “offered an account of the political economy of the different types of society known to history, and a sharply focused analysis of the problems which modern governments faced in extending the wealth, liberty and happiness of their subjects at a time when the international order was being transformed by the expansion of empire and the growth of commerce” (*Adam Smith* 2-3). In looking back at the progression of civilisation (from hunter-gatherer to commercial) Smith delineates how societies have thrived economically to ultimately create commercial society. As Hont and Ignatieff make clear, one of the central questions Smith asks is why the labouring poor of a more impoverished “savage” society, who are able to keep the entirety of what they produce, are in such greater poverty than the labouring poor of a commercial society, who only keep a fraction of their production (3-4)? The answer offered by Smith is one of the foundational elements of his theory, the division of labour.

Though this project does not engage with Smith’s other texts, there is, according to Athol Fitzgibbons, a distinct progression through Smith’s works, revealing a larger system at work, where each work builds upon the other:

(1) His laws of Nature are explained in *The History of Astronomy* and other methodological essays such as *The History of Ancient Physics*. (2) *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* defined the moral code that society required. (3) The *Lectures on Jurisprudence* analysed the constitutional and cultural implications of this moral code. (4) *The Wealth of Nations* demonstrated the possibility of laws that would combine a moral culture with economic growth. (20-21)

Finally, *Lectures on Rhetoric* “analyse Nature and convey the social implications to people who could not see the larger picture [...]” (21). This system, according to Fitzgibbons, is based more in moral theory than has commonly been understood (21). Smith’s overall project is an integration of economics and morals through development of “a philosophy that would harness the force of self-love without being dominated by it” (Fitzgibbons 4); the purpose of this system was:

[...] to define a set of laws, a constitution in the widest possible sense, that would permit Britain to benefit from liberalism without triggering the fearful process of long-run cultural degeneration. Smith believed he could resolve the conflict between morals and material goods by discovering the scientific laws that regulated society and morals. (Fitzgibbons 14)

While it has been commonly identified that Smith had a larger project at work, the exact purpose of that project varies from critic to critic. Like Fitzgibbons, Knud Haakonssen identifies Smith's political economy as "only part of a comprehensive philosophical system centering on the nature of human action in general" (1), but unlike him, Haakonssen argues that "Smith's systematic achievement can be understood as a bold undermining of an ancient dispute between Stoics and Epicureans, which had been revived in early modern philosophy" (1). Andrew Skinner writes that "[...] Smith's real sophistication is to be seen in the vast analytical system with which he provided us, rather than in his contribution to individual areas of economic analysis" ("Analytical Introduction" 9). For Skinner, one of the key issues at work in *The Wealth of Nations* is "the interdependence of all economic phenomena" (9; 11). Smith first analyses individual problems before moving on "to demonstrate their mutual connexion" (A. Skinner 9). For Skinner, it is especially important to remember this interconnectedness in light of Smith's own view of the wide scope of his project, that *Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations* are "but parts of a single, greater whole" (10; Phillipson *Adam Smith* 2) in which "the parts of a grand synthetic system which he hoped to complete with a published account of 'the general principles of law and government, and of the different revolutions which they had undergone in the different ages and periods of society'" (advertisement for the 6th edition of *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, quoted in A. Skinner 10). Though he does not explicitly elucidate the purpose of the overarching interconnections between Smith's works, Samuel Fleischacker argues that Smith did not, as is popularly believed, "leave his moral beliefs behind him when he came to write WN [*The Wealth of Nations*]" (xv), and that the morals propounded in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* especially, came to significantly inform *The Wealth of Nations* even though their presence may not be quite so overt.⁵

A key foundational element for Smith is the division of labour, but before this can happen, as Fitzgibbons points out, there must be an accumulation of capital (145). Similarly, for this to happen prudence and frugality must be adhered to in order for capital to accumulate (Mehta 261). Through

⁵ This controversy is the so-called "Adam Smith Problem" – the seeming inability to reconcile the moral concerns of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* with the (alleged) lack of morality in *The Wealth of Nations*. Fleischacker, Phillipson, Andrew Skinner, Liz Bellamy, and Pratap Bhanu Mehta offer a variety of interpretations regarding how closely integrated *The Wealth of Nations* and *Theory of Moral Sentiments* are, or should be seen as being.

dividing labour into distinct tasks, total production increases over that of one person individually making the entire product (Smith Book I Chapter I). This division of labour arose out of the propensity in human nature to “truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another” (Book I 117); if one person has a particular skill in creating a product and demand exists for that product it naturally follows that the produce of the person with the demand will be exchanged for the product desired (Book I 119). Though demand is the genesis of the division of labour, it is also limited by the demand for exchange, or the market (Book I Chapter III). If there is limited demand for a product, the division of labour to produce that product will have little bearing.

Throughout *The Wealth of Nations* Smith emphasises that the economy is not driven by feelings of charity or benevolence. Smith has been popularly read as regarding humans as essentially self-serving, and it is only through this self-love that individuals can be motivated to seemingly do things for others:

But man has almost constant occasion for the help of his brethren, and it is in vain for him to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and shew them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. [...] It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages. Nobody but a beggar chuses to depend chiefly upon the benevolence of his fellow-citizens. (Book I 118-119)

Fleischacker, however, posits that this is the most widely misread passage in Smith’s work. Fleischacker argues that to read *The Wealth of Nations* as primarily or solely concerned with self-interest is to misread the text (84). He writes:

Of *course* we address the butcher and the baker in terms of what they can get from us! Who would ever have supposed otherwise? If Smith’s point was that people are *always* motivated by self-interest he should have used a less obvious example. [...] No self-respecting person, in ordinary circumstances, would dream of going into a butcher shop and begging for a cut of sirloin. Nor does Smith deny that in extraordinary circumstances people do beg [...] but a beggar, of course, does so choose. Hence the passage as a whole cannot possibly make the point *that* people are motivated exclusively by self-interest. (90)

Like Skinner, Fleischacker stresses the social element present in *The Wealth of Nations* (47, 91). Though it is justifiable to appeal to an individual’s self-love in order to get something from him or her, this does not necessarily mean that all humans are motivated by self-interest all the time. Having mutual interests often leads people to work together or further the goals of another while simultaneously pursuing personal

ones (Fleischacker 91). Smith is not against benevolence, but he is a proponent of using self-love rather than good-will as the basis of economic transactions (Fleischacker 96). Mehta argues that “self-interest functions in a complicated way even within *The Wealth of Nations* and [...] it is a term suffused with moral connotations throughout” (247). Fitzgibbons similarly argues that Smith has been misunderstood: “The motive behind Smith’s system [...] was not meant to be self-love, but a Stoic harmony of higher and lower motives, the balance between the two depending on the particular instance. Self-love was to provide the motive force, while virtue provided the values or sense of direction” (140). According to Fitzgibbons, the foundation of society for Smith is justice – the legal constraint on excessive self-love – but not self-love itself:

The real Smith [...] did not stand for free trade, empirical science, moral vacuity, and self-love. The real system can be loosely summarized as *free trade within good laws and supplemented by moral motives* – meaning that Smith’s system meant the enforcement of commutative justice; and in addition, for economic as well as political and cultural reasons, it allocated an important role to virtue. (Fitzgibbons 152)

Skinner, however, does not view these famous passages as embodying any kind of conflict or significant misinterpretation. He writes “[...] the arguments of *The Wealth of Nations* seemed to lend a certain sanctity to the self-interested pursuit of gain, by showing that such activity was productive of benefit to society at large; by demonstrating that the enterprise of individuals was capable, when left free of regulation, of carrying the standard of material well-being to heights hitherto impossible and scarcely calculable” (8).

Despite the wide variety of debates regarding the integration of morals into *The Wealth of Nations* and the presence of a moral ethics throughout Smith’s works as a whole, it seems to me that the treatise itself is not intended to offer moral judgment on the system of political economy it lays out. The fact that Smith generally eschews moral categories in his delineation of how nations create wealth suggests that any moral underpinnings present in the text should not be regarded as the main focus; Smith avoids these topics intentionally because they stand in the way of his economic point. Smith was a moralist and had a theory of ethics as can clearly be seen in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* but *The Wealth of Nations* is fundamentally different in its focus on prosperity through economic development. Similarly, Smith avoids inclusion of politics in *The Wealth of Nations*; for Smith, history and social

progression is based on economics, not politics, and as such he largely avoids political commentary or inclusion of the political in his analysis of commerce and wealth creation. As Hanley argues, Smith's position "is less concerned with the political effects of commercialization on which republican and Marxist critiques focus than with commercialization's psychological effects" (5); Smith acknowledges the effects of commercialisation, but does not overtly moralise or politicise them. Smith's system of political economy is fundamentally different to the ideology of civic humanism in the way it sees commerce as not only essential to society's development, but as wielding an ultimately positive force on the collective.

The Enlightenment theory of stadial history utilised by Smith clearly influenced Veblen's theory, though his reliance on it and his debt to Smith specifically, goes unacknowledged. Veblen's theory covers a substantial though unspecified period of time which, according to McKendrick's more specific interpretation, encompasses and in fact focuses on the eighteenth century. McKendrick, while acknowledging that Smith's acceptance and forwarding of consumption as integral to economic prosperity was key in legitimising the "consumer revolution" as such, does not engage directly with Smith's theories. Smith states in *The Wealth of Nations* that: "Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer" (Book IV 245). Smith contrasts this to the precedence production takes under the mercantile system, which "seems to consider production, and not consumption, as the ultimate end and object of all industry and commerce" (Book IV 246). Within Smith's system of free trade, the consumer becomes the motivation behind production, thus the market is ultimately bound to the will of the consumer rather than the consumer being bound to the agenda of the producer; the power lies with those performing the consumption. Though Smith acknowledges the importance of the consumer and the role of consumption within the creation of wealth, the vast majority of his treatise concerns production, with his treatment of consumption remaining latent at best.

The publication of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* coupled with the growing industrialisation of Britain marks a slow but discernible shift in the perceptions and tone of debates surrounding the consumption of goods. Rather than a debate about the perceived morality or amorality of excessive consumption and the consumption of luxury goods, the discussion begins to more overtly incorporate

issues of political economy, with greater incorporation of production and discussion of work, occupation, and labour. Rather than being solely concerned with consumption, and the role of the consumer in society at large, post-Smithian late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century novels reflect a wider scope in their treatment of consumption, seeing it as part of a larger whole where perhaps their predecessors fifty years earlier did not have the same breadth of treatment.

IV.

Many critics have noted how fiction responds to consumption and political economy.⁶ While Smith has been used in discussions of economic representations in novels of the long eighteenth century, these studies are not abundant and often focus on select passages from *The Wealth of Nations* such as the invisible hand metaphor or Smith's take on self-interest rather than the work as a whole. More frequently, scholars focus on *Theory of Moral Sentiments* as a perhaps more accessible route into Smith's work or as a means of reconciling the alleged "Adam Smith Problem." Engaging with Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* on its own without any of his other works, *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in particular, does not occur often within existing criticism. To separate the two is perhaps an injustice to Smith's overall project or philosophy, but it does seem that in relying heavily on *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, *The Wealth of Nations* does not receive the attention it deserves in literary applications. Discussing Smith's presentation of commercial exchange, and consumption more specifically, in relation to novels of the long eighteenth century is something that has not been sufficiently addressed, and is a vacancy which this project intends to fill.

This project is not the first to offer a connection between economics and the development of the novel. Liz Bellamy argues in *Commerce, Morality and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (1998) that

⁶ *The 'Invisible Hand' and British Fiction, 1818-1860* by Eleanor Courtemanche, "The Invisible Hand: Supernatural Agency in Political Economy and the Gothic Novel" by Stefan Andriopoulos, Wendy Motooka's chapter "Laying Down the General Rule: Adam Smith, impartial spectators and the philosopher's trade" from her book, *The Age of Reason: Quixotism, Sentimentalism and Political Economy in the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Kevin McLaughlin's "The Financial Imp: Ethics and Finance in Nineteenth-Century Fiction," Kurt Heinzelman's "The Last Georgic: *Wealth of Nations* and the Scene of Writing," David Kaufman's *The Business of Common Life: Novels and Classical Economics Between Revolution and Reform*, "Imagination and Sympathy: Sterne and Adam Smith" by Kenneth MacLean, "Frankenstein and the Monster of Representation" by Daniel Cottom, and Elsie B. Michie's "Austen's Powers: Engaging With Adam Smith in Debates About Wealth and Virtue" are a few examples.

economic writings should be taken into greater consideration when discussing the context out of which the novel arose (1-2). According to Bellamy, there is a more complex “discursive landscape” available in the eighteenth century that critics do not engage with, one which runs counter to classical civic humanism, which makes a clear distinction between public and private and a willingness to sacrifice self-interest to the state (3). This distinction, Bellamy argues, becomes complicated in the eighteenth century as the boundaries of the public sphere shift: “As the pursuit of self-interest began to be represented within economics as the duty of the individual, it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between the public and the private” (3). Bellamy examines a variety of eighteenth-century novels, including Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding as well as sentimental and Jacobin fiction, arguing that “[t]he eighteenth-century novel [...] represents a kind of Mandevillian Moment, in which the context between public and private morality was brought to the fore, and the novel became the ground on which it was fought” (9); for Bellamy, the development of the novel in the eighteenth century is related to the shifting perceptions of private and public spheres that coincided with shifting opinions on moral and economic philosophies. These novels, for Bellamy, can be seen “as an embodiment of the ethical tensions that conditioned the period, shaped by the artistic consequence of the divide between old civic humanist concepts of the public and more modern, private terms of analysis of moral behaviour” (7). Bellamy elucidates both the economic and the literary context of her discussion of eighteenth century novels, focusing the former on the contrast between the moral writing of the civic humanist tradition and the glorification of trade in economic writing, while emphasising in the latter the importance eighteenth-century critics placed on epic poetry and the epic tradition which, Bellamy suggests, is grounded in civic humanist tradition. Throughout her discussion of the ways in which eighteenth-century novels “debate [...] the relationship between public and private virtue, and the role and nature of each” (182), Bellamy focuses on commercial society as a whole rather than its component parts, such as consumption specifically, and though she makes ample use of Smith in defining the economic context, his theory does not feature significantly in her textual analysis.

Though Bellamy incorporates gender into her study in that she notes the absence of women in any of the available discourses of civic humanism, moral philosophy, or economic analysis (3-4), it does

not play a significant role in her analysis. In Gillian Skinner's *Sensibility and Economics in the Novel, 1740-1800: The Price of a Tear* (1999), however, gender is integral to her analysis of the connection between sentimental novels and economic discourse.⁷ Skinner argues that "[e]ighteenth-century sensibility is linked inescapably to the economic," where "sensibility manifests itself again and again economically and in situations of financial delicacy and exigency" (1) despite the convention that sensibility was "supposed to have abhorred" such topics (2). Because the sentimental novel has "always been seen as essentially feminine," the connections between the genre and economics have been "frequently ignored or glossed over" (2). Invoking the wider context of civic humanist and economic discourses, Skinner suggests that, "[...] rather than lacking the newer economic vocabularies, eighteenth-century sentimental fiction incorporates and assimilates them in a variety of ways, so that whenever such texts deal with the financial, particularly where it is connected with feeling and with charity, there is a perhaps unexpected but nevertheless crucial conjunction of apparently inimical discourses" (10). Skinner discusses connections between sensibility and the economic in part through examining, as she sees it, Smith's reservations about the effects of commerce on society, arguing that "[h]is worries reveal how far even an advocate of commerce could be persuaded to view commerce as useful but nevertheless unpalatable" (13). Skinner finds that despite the seeming separation between novels of sensibility and economic and political discourse, "the sentimental novel was able to take part in contemporary debates on economic policy, forms of government, revolutionary politics and, infusing all of these, definitions of femininity" (190). Like Skinner, I interpret Smith as presenting an equivocal stance on certain elements of his treatise which is then reflected in the literature produced by those who utilise his work, as we will see in chapters five and six. Yet however ambivalent some of his representations of commerce may be, I find that his belief in the social benefits that grow from commercial society is staunch, and ultimately outweighs any ill-effects; some of Scott's works of the early nineteenth century, however, as we will see in chapter six in particular, question these benefits.

⁷ Kathryn Sutherland similarly focuses on gender in her analysis of Smith's lack of attention to female labour in her chapter "Adam Smith's Master Narrative: Women and *The Wealth of Nations*."

There are two ways in which we see the discussion of consumption – in historical studies, including the works discussed in the first three sections of this introduction, and in literary criticism. Consumption has received some significant attention in regards to particular literary texts and there have been many wide-ranging literary studies on economic issues, incorporating both production and consumption and the eighteenth-century understanding of political economy in context of the novel.⁸

In *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (1996), James Thompson examines the eighteenth century's "crisis in the notion of value – that is, where is value or worth to be located [...]?" (2). According to Thompson, "[t]he two new literary forms or discourses that preeminently handle or manage this crisis – political economy and the novel – are at the same time produced by this crisis and are inseparable from it. That is, both the novel and political economy can be understood as essentially solutions, for each in its way describes or represents or figures value and at the same time is charged with explaining it" (2-3). Thompson focuses throughout his study on public and private:

That in the discourse of political economy and the discourse of the novel, value comes to be figured so differently has a great deal to do with the changing conceptions of public and private across the period. Social transformation in eighteenth-century England results in a reconceptualization of social space and redefinitions of what is public and what is private. For the novel to constitute a discourse of privacy and domesticity perforce there must develop a corresponding discourse of publicity, and that discourse, equally new, is political economy. (22)

Thompson charts the intersections and diversions between these two discourses in focusing primarily on Defoe, Fielding, and Burney; in his analysis of value, Thompson focuses most directly on money, exchange, currency, and debt, incorporating consumption but not using it as a primary focus.

Sussman discusses consumption more directly though she does not incorporate Smith into her analysis. She argues "that recognizing the impact of consumerism on perceptions of the colonial periphery during this period reveals the crucial role of commodity fetishism in colonial ideology; conversely, acknowledging the effects of colonial and mercantile expansion on domestic consumer

⁸ Literary studies such as Sekora's *Luxury*, Patrick Brantlinger's *Fictions of State: Culture and Credit in Britain 1694-1994*, Bellamy's *Commerce, Morality and the Eighteenth-Century Novel*, Deidre Lynch's *The Economy of Character, The Character of Credit* by Margot Finn, and *The Self and It* by Julie Park offer insightful and important analyses of the role of economics and commerce in eighteenth-century literature.

practices explains some of the contemporaneous anxiety surrounding colonial commodities” (1-2). This study has proven particularly useful in my discussion of *Humphry Clinker* in chapter two in drawing out the implications of Lismahago’s colonial symbolism. Her study focuses on the domestic implications of consuming products of the colonies, with particular attention to social anxieties over women’s consumption and the perceived feminisation of male consumers through consumption of goods from Britain’s eastern empire; Sussman traces the history of “consumer protests against colonialism and imperialism” and “the role of commodity culture” in the abolition movement and the role of consumption within that movement (2).

While many of the historical and literary studies mentioned have incorporated either a focus on consumption or a focus on Smithian or pre-Smithian political economy, none incorporate both to any substantial extent, which is something this project intends to do.

V.

Despite contentions over the *historical* veracity of the degree to which the consumer revolution did or did not take place, literature of the long eighteenth century articulates the fact that consumption not only increased but that it transformed society and the way individuals perceived themselves and each other. The social hierarchy shifted as a result of increased consumption, causing not only significant anxiety about the stability of social boundaries but an increased awareness as to the impact of conspicuous consumption; in theorising the causes of national wealth, consumption was recognised as the driving force behind it (Smith Book IV 245).

The novels chosen for this project incorporate both personal interest and a desire to pursue new readings of canonical texts. As my project incorporates ideas of nation I have been conscious of including authors from various parts of Great Britain, which allows for a discussion of place for the individual within Britain as a whole and for each of the novels to speak for separate and distinct nations. Discussion of these novels incorporates a discussion of genre, beginning with an example of the novel’s initial development in *Tom Jones*, through the ever-evolving adaptations of generic convention and innovation to end with the popularisation of the historical novel with Sir Walter Scott. This variety provides a wealth of character experience and authorial intent which heightens the complexity of the project’s analysis of

consumption, as well as lending greater significance to the consistencies that exist between these seemingly disparate texts. These texts were also chosen for the particular ways they each interact with issues of consumption; each novel is unique in the way it portrays consumption and the way in which it articulates various corresponding issues: anxiety over its impact on the nation and society either economically or through gender constructs, implications on work and industriousness, effects on the virtue of both men and women, ramifications of the system of credit and debt inherent in an exchange economy, and the benefits and drawbacks both socially and economically of developing and relying on commercial society. These novels exemplify the ongoing evolution of consumption debates in the long eighteenth century while simultaneously showing the evolution of the genre.

We start with Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* and the way in which the novel's awareness of its own status as consumable commodity relates to the metaphoric and physical consumption within the novel's plot; the chapter establishes a relationship between the problematic generic status of *Tom Jones* and the theme of physical consumption. In its reliance on the framework of genre development, this first chapter is different from the five that follow it, however, given the archetypal status of *Tom Jones* and how integral the theme of consumption is to the novel's plot and characterisation, pointed attention to genre development is fitting.

Chapter two on Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* examines eighteenth-century concerns regarding women's consumption through analysing the novel and its reclamation of foreign influence through female consumption in the largely neglected character of Tabitha Bramble. Since Sekora's *Luxury*, Smollett's novel has often been cited when discussing eighteenth-century consumption anxieties and the novel's interpretation of consumption has been amply debated. However, the issue of Lismahago's foreignness, and the novel's overall presentation of consumption of the foreign as a source of degenerative harm to the individual landed gentleman, and by extension the nation as a whole, has, apart from Sussman's work, not been fully examined. Discussion of the consumption of foreign food and material goods extends to discussion of the novel's treatment of cannibalism, both literally and metaphorically. Attention to consumption of the foreign is significant, however, because it further reflects anxieties within the eighteenth century regarding the social and moral degradation of the

British nation; consumption through cannibalism, whether literal or metaphoric, further complicates a gendered view of consumption particularly the potentially emasculating effects of female consumption.

Chapter three analyses Frances Burney's novel *Camilla* in relation to its treatment of the commodifying effects of commerce, and, drawing on the work of Kowaleski-Wallace, shopping. Drawing parallels between the experience of shopping in the eighteenth century and the marriage market, specifically as relates to the male gaze, the chapter argues that there is a connection between the novel as commodity, created by Burney in order to sell and turn a profit, and the commodification of *Camilla* through the male gaze. In relation to the effects of the gaze, the novel draws on issues of intentional display where monetary debt is an effect of the social obligation to display, or an inviting of the gaze of others. Though Burney's novels have received significant attention in recent years, the issue of consumption within discussions of the novel's treatment of commerce has been less abundant. The debts of Lionel and Clermont in particular have not received the attention they deserve considering how significant their debts are to the novel's action.

Chapter four marks a shift within the project as a whole in that the final three chapters continue the analysis of consumption with the understanding that these novels were written in a post-Smithian world.⁹ The chapter discusses the ways in which Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *The Absentee* problematise the absence of politics as a foundational element in social growth and civilisation's progression through utilising Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* as a roadmap for Irish economic and social development. In adhering to Smith as the way forward for Ireland, I argue, Edgeworth inadvertently complicates her message of economic advancement through necessarily omitting politics from a highly political national situation. The novels' treatment of landlords as social rather than political leaders in particular highlights this complication; additionally, representations of the native Irish subsequently become double-edged.

Burney's *The Wanderer* continues the Smithian analysis begun in chapter four. The chapter argues that Burney's fourth novel amplifies and adapts Smith's ambivalence regarding consumption, and

⁹ Though *Camilla*, published in 1796, was of course after the publication of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, the novel does not acknowledge historical events in any way, or the publication of an economic treatise.

in the process discusses the way in which Smith presents the value of labour and issues of debt. The novel ultimately comes to challenge some of the conclusions Smith draws regarding “value.” Paying particular attention to depictions of producers and consumers within the novel, productive and unproductive labourers, and ramifications of the credit economy (i.e. debt), the chapter investigates Burney’s critique of Smith’s economy of exchange.

The final chapter looks at Smith’s Enlightenment theory of stadial progression as it relates to English interaction with Scotland, building on the work of Ian Duncan who suggests that in *Rob Roy* Walter Scott challenges the expected historical progression presented in *Waverley*; I deviate from Duncan in arguing that *Rob Roy* comes to question the whole theory of stadial history, suggesting that Scott ultimately interrogates Smith’s founding principle that commercial society is the pinnacle of human civilisation. Connecting Frank Osbaldistone’s lack of a place within the stadial progression to his aesthetic inclination and extreme reluctance to engage professionally with the commercial sphere, the chapter shows the representatives of commercial society to be morally suspect.

Through the temporal progression from *Tom Jones* to *Rob Roy* we see, through the ways in which each novel uses themes of consumption as well as physical and metaphorical consumption imagery, the progression of the novel genre.

Chapter One: Consumption and Genre in *Tom Jones*

Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* is a pivotal eighteenth-century novel, not only because it is widely considered to be one of the foundational works of the then nascent genre, but because of the subsequent controversy that has arisen out of this classification, most specifically out of Ian Watt's 1957 *The Rise of the Novel*. It is a crucial text to use as a starting point for this project because of the interconnections it presents between genre and consumption; this chapter will attempt to establish a relation between the problematic generic status of Fielding's novel and the theme of physical consumption within it. *Tom Jones* is not overtly a novel about conspicuous consumption or the effects of luxury, yet Tom's consumption of food as well as his sexual consumption of women is conspicuously detailed throughout the novel. Genre is a problem for Fielding: he seeks to distinguish his own "new Province of Writing" (*Tom Jones* 68) from those of his contemporaries while simultaneously capitalising on some of their conventions in order to appeal to a wider audience. Within *Tom Jones* consumption is used as a physical representation of desire and is a nod towards the titillating excitement of amatory fiction, thus attempting to harness that genre's popularity rather than its moral import or political commentary; Fielding leaves behind the political aspect of amatory or courtly tradition, focusing instead on the privatised "vulgar" body, its physical appetites, and the figurative and literal performance of consumption, thus naturalising the excess of amatory fiction.

Watt's groundbreaking study argues that the English novel arose when and where it did because of the social and historical context that allowed for the rise of the middle class, that is, the reading public. In attempting to delineate the novel's rise, Watt discusses the characteristics of the novel in order to distinguish it from "previous types of narrative" while allowing it to be "broad enough to apply to whatever is usually put in the novel category" (9). Watt suggests that the novel challenged traditional forms of literature in its "primary criterion" of "truth to individual experience" (13); in prizing individual experience, the novel lives up to its name in valuing originality and newness (13). Watt argues that historians of the novel "have seen 'realism' as the defining characteristic which differentiates the work of the early eighteenth-century novelists from previous fiction" (10). In discussing the primacy of "realism" Watt distinguishes between modern realism and the realism of medieval philosophy; modern realism is

connected to the temper of philosophical realism in finding truth through individual, sensory experience, while the realism of medieval philosophy is found in universal truths. This “[...] analogy with philosophical realism helps to isolate and define the distinctive narrative mode of the novel. This [...] is the sum of literary techniques whereby the novel’s imitation of human life follows the procedures adopted by philosophical realism in its attempt to ascertain and report the truth” (31). Watt, however, conflates the text’s “realism,” as generated through the aesthetic effects of generic convention, with subjective “reality”; rather than equating what happens on the page with what happens in real life, “realism” for Watt is based on the individual unmediated subjective experience. Watt enumerates these aesthetic conventions as the formal elements that distinguish the novel’s realism; these formal elements include a rejection of traditional plots, rejection of universals over the particular, individualised characters, characters set in particular time and space (placing the action “in time”), specificity of setting, and plain language (13-30). In delineating these formal elements, Watt attempts to distinguish them from formal conventions, which are, as Watt sees it, antithetical to the innovation that lies at the heart of the genre. However, by the very act of listing and formalising the elements of realism employed by the genre, Watt seems to counteract his very intention of proving the lack of convention.

One of the primary complications in Watt’s analysis of the novel is the way in which Fielding is necessarily excluded from it. Realism for Watt provides subjectivity through immediate individual experience, as he shows through his analysis of Defoe and particularly of Richardson, but this is also where Fielding does not fit with his argument that realism is integral to the novel form. Fielding does not represent the subjective individual experience, but rather the individual is defined through a certain set of social situations and obligations. In Defoe and Richardson, the first-person narrator allows for immediate, unmediated access to the thoughts and experiences of the individual characters, thus, according to Watt, providing subjective reality. Fielding’s use of third-person narration disallows this same kind of subjectivity; though not his primary focus, individual experience is still captured by Fielding, not through character point of view but rather through the narrator’s omniscience.

Similarly, as Watt points out, Fielding does not adhere to the novel’s formal elements. The novel’s adherence to particular time and place, for example, is approached differently by Fielding. His

novels take “a more external and traditional point of view” in his scornful refusal to write in the present tense as Defoe and Richardson do (Watt 25); Fielding intended to be more “selective” in the way in which he handled “the time dimension” (Watt 25), intending to:

[...] pursue the method of those writers who profess to disclose the revolutions of countries, than to imitate the painful and voluminous historian who, to preserve the regularity of his series, thinks himself obliged to fill up as much paper with the detail of months and years in which nothing remarkable happened, as he employs upon those notable eras when the greatest scenes have been transacted on the human stage. (Fielding, *Tom Jones* 67)

Though *Tom Jones* is “voluminous,” the content is pertinent to the action rather than, as in Richardson, filled with the minutiae of daily life in an effort to appear more “real.” Watt criticises Fielding’s lack of particularity of place, suggesting that he “gives no full interiors, and his frequent landscape descriptions are conventionalized,” yet his topography is as “careful” as his chronology (Watt 27). Rather than offering characters’ subjective view of landscape or setting, Fielding uses contemporary, accurate place names and locations as well as using an almanac for greater accuracy in, for example, mentioning the phases of the moon¹⁰ (Watt 25, 27). Fielding’s use of language, compared with that of Defoe or Richardson, “did not break with the traditions of Augustan prose style or outlook,” which, according to Watt, can be argued as “detract[ing] from the authenticity of his narratives” (29). Where Defoe and Richardson tried to capture the “natural voice of Moll Flanders and Pamela Andrews” through using a style that “restricts itself almost entirely to a descriptive and denotative use of language” (Watt 29), Fielding, according to Watt, lacks the same immediacy: “the prose immediately informs us that exploratory operations have long since been accomplished, that we are to be spared that labour, and presented instead with a sifted and clarified report of the findings” (Watt 30). The “stylistic devices of epic,” that is, Fielding’s departure from plain and simple language, are a departure from representing everyday life and subjectivity and so depart, according to Watt, from the elements of formal realism (255). In making “an uncompromising application of the realist point of view in language and prose structure” Richardson and Defoe must “forfeit other literary values” while “Fielding’s stylistic virtues tend to interfere with his technique as a novelist, because a patent selectiveness of vision destroys our belief in the reality of report, or at least diverts our attention from the content of the report to the skill of the reporter”

¹⁰ Mentions of the moon occur in Book VIII Ch. IX and X, Book XI Ch. III, and Book XII Ch. V.

(30). Watt sees Fielding's narratorial interjections as a stylistic and technical flaw which detracts from the action and inhibits the "realism" of the story rather than seeing it as evidence of further innovation. Though, as Watt makes clear, these formal realist elements are not yet conventions, their meaning for a contemporary reader still depends on his or her awareness of the conventions being rejected. Watt understates Fielding's contribution to the development of the genre: "Since it was *Pamela* that supplied the initial impetus for the writing of *Joseph Andrews*, Fielding cannot be considered as having made quite so direct a contribution as Richardson to the rise of the novel [...]" (239). Because, as Watt sees it, Fielding was inspired by Richardson, he does not deserve as much credit in the development of the novel. Watt champions Defoe and Richardson for their originality and lack of reliance on previous traditions while critiquing Fielding for his more overt homages to epic and classical tradition. Yet the novel was not created in a vacuum – the influence of preceding traditions cannot be wholly escaped; though Fielding's innovation may look different from that of Defoe or Richardson, it is no reason to discount it.

Michael McKeon shows just that in *The Origins of the English Novel*, which complicates and sophisticates Watt's study through responding to the ways in which Fielding does not fit within Watt's argument. McKeon considers how Watt deals with the issue of realism/reality through a deeper look at the precursors to the novel genre; in discussing what has come before, McKeon makes clear what is being rejected and shifted by the genre whereas in Watt's assessment, the novel seemingly springs to life unaided by previous convention. McKeon argues that:

[...] the problems associated with the thesis of the rise of the novel in the early modern period may be overcome by reconceiving that thesis according to the assumptions of a dialectical theory of genre. 'The novel' must be understood as what Marx calls a 'simple abstraction,' a deceptively monolithic category that encloses a complex historical process. It attains its modern, 'institutional' stability and coherence at this time because of its unrivaled power both to formulate, and to explain, a set of problems that are central to early modern experience. These may be understood as problems of categorical instability, which the novel, originating to resolve, also inevitably reflects. The first sort of instability with which the novel is concerned has to do with generic categories; the second, with social categories. (20)

McKeon uses this dialectical model to explain the rise of the novel genre; genres are identified by their difference from or dialogue with each other, not by their correspondence or lack of correspondence with "reality." In particular, McKeon makes the point that the novel genre is dialectically influenced by romance, even while it simultaneously uses it as an oppositional term against which other genres strive to

separate themselves. Because genres are defined in relation to each other they are inherently unstable; rather than seeing this as a weakness of his work, McKeon sees Fielding's play with genre in *Tom Jones* as displaying this instability and dialectical relationship, in particular the influence of romance on Fielding's work. As McKeon points out, "[...] one central problem that Watt's unusually persuasive argument has helped to uncover is that of the persistence of romance, both within the novel and concurrently with its rise. And behind this lurks a yet more fundamental problem, the inadequacy of our theoretical distinction between 'novel' and 'romance'" (3). McKeon similarly takes a dialectical approach in his sophistication of Watt's explanation for the social reasons behind the novel's rise, namely the emergence and dominance of the middle class. According to McKeon, the middling-sort come to self-consciousness about themselves through being taught to think of themselves in a certain way, a way which the novel teaches them to do. The novel creates the middle class by feeding their desire to hear more about themselves. In this way, the novel produces the middling-sort rather than reflecting their previous existence, thus formalising new social categories.

Watt discusses the rise of the novel in relation to the rise of the middle class. According to Watt, the rise of the middle class:

[...] may have altered the centre of gravity of the reading public sufficiently to place the middle class as a whole in a dominating position for the first time. [...] The fact that literature in the eighteenth century was addressed to an ever-widening audience must have weakened the relative importance of those readers with enough education and leisure to take a professional or semi-professional interest in classical and modern letters; and in return it must have increased the relative importance of those who desired an easier form of literary entertainment, even if it had little prestige among the literati. (48)

Though the reading public was not as large at mid-century as it would become by the century's end, the number of people reading, and reading for pleasure, was "large by comparison with previous periods" (35), and the power and interest behind this shift was the middle class. Because of their expense, novels "were still far beyond the means of any except the comfortably off" (42), though this was mitigated in part by the introduction of circulating libraries. Though some libraries existed earlier, "the rapid spread of the movement came after 1740" and the cost of a subscription was "moderate" (43), increasingly putting it within reach of a wider percentage of people. Novels, it seems, were the main impetus of the popularity of

libraries, if not their creation: “Most circulating libraries stocked all types of literature, but novels were widely regarded as their main attraction: and there can be little doubt that they led to the most notable increase in the reading public for fiction which occurred during the century” (43). Novels, then, became more widely accessible to a wider swathe of the public. The increase in women readers, caused in part by a general increase in leisure, also contributed not only to the rise of the reading public but to the popularity of novels in particular. This overall increase in the number of readers, but particularly readers of the middle class, or “social groups concerned with commerce and manufacture” (48) meant that a wider array of people were demanding entertainment as opposed to edification or instruction, “favour[ing] ease of entertainment at the expense of obedience to traditional critical standards [...]” (49).

These critical standards were subverted by another force – that of the bookseller. The power of these individuals “to influence authors and audience was undoubtedly very great” as they “had achieved a financial standing, a social prominence, and a literary importance considerably greater than that of either their forbears or of their counterparts abroad” (53). Watt does not, however, see booksellers as “promot[ing] the rise of the novel directly” (55), rather they indirectly “assisted the development of one of the characteristic technical innovations of the new form – its copious particularity of description and explanation – and made possible the remarkable independence of Defoe and Richardson from the classical critical tradition which was an indispensable condition of their literary achievement” (56). Booksellers, as opposed to patrons, encouraged explicit, plain writing in order to broaden a work’s appeal to a greater portion of the population, as well as advocating “speed and copiousness” as “supreme economic virtues” (56). The market for fiction, then, vastly increased with an increasing middle class who not only wanted to hear about themselves and see their own lives reflected in popular fiction, but had the leisure and ability to read the works which were being produced at a much faster rate and with a less classically educated readership in mind. Watt sees the booksellers’ ability to shape the demands of fiction as beneficial to Defoe and Richardson in particular; he largely ignores, however, the impact on Fielding, perhaps because of Fielding’s outspoken disdain for the influence of booksellers and critics alike. Fielding, according to Watt, “explicitly connected this ‘fatal revolution’ [of booksellers’ influence] with a disastrous decline in literary standards: he asserted that the ‘paper merchants, commonly called booksellers’, habitually

employed ‘journeymen of the trade’ without ‘the qualifications of any genius or learning’, and suggested that their products had driven out good writing [...]” (*True Patriot* No.1, 1745, qtd. in Watt 54).

Watt ultimately sees Defoe and Richardson as more greatly influenced by the rise of the middle class because they were part of it:

As middle-class London tradesmen they had only to consult their own standards of form and content to be sure that what they wrote would appeal to a large audience. This is probably the supremely important effect of the changed composition of the reading public and the new dominance of the booksellers upon the rise of the novel; not so much that Defoe and Richardson responded to the new needs of their audience, but that they were able to express those needs from the inside much more freely than would previously have been possible. (59)

Fielding, however, is not included in this summation, probably because he was not a part of the middling-sort, and openly disparaged writers who ignored the example set for them by previous literary greats, that is, disparaged those writers less classically educated than himself, as evidenced in the epic foundations of *Tom Jones*. Watt points out that both Defoe and Richardson were hostile towards epic tradition “based on the manners and morals which it exhibited” (243), but he also suggests that the epic form did not provide a sufficient level of realism: “In the early eighteenth century there was an increasing awareness of the great and numerous disparities between the Homeric and the contemporary world” (245); Richardson in particular, Watt suggests, disliked “heroic virtues” but also rejected epic tradition because it did not reflect contemporary life. The grounds on which Richardson rejected the use of epic are the same as those Watt sees as making it generally unpopular: “This unpopularity must have been connected with the fact that reading epic meant a continuous effort to exclude the normal expectations of everyday contemporary life – the very expectations which the novel exploited” (246). It seems natural to then ask why, if epic was so widely unpopular, did Fielding opt to classify *Joseph Andrews* as “comic epic-poem in prose” (25) and *Tom Jones* as “Heroic, Historical, Prosaic Poem” (131) and “prosai-comi-epic writing” (181)? Watt rather blandly suggests that, because the novel was not highly regarded “Fielding probably felt that to enlist the prestige of epic might help win for his first essay in the genre a less prejudiced hearing from the *literati* than might otherwise have been expected” (258). Watt ultimately suggests that “the epic influence on Fielding was very slight, mainly retrograde, and of little importance in the later tradition of the novel” and “its main function was to suggest one of the high standards of literary achievement which he wished to

keep in mind when he began on his new path in fiction [...]” (259). While these are valid observations, they gloss over Fielding’s own potential for innovation, ignoring that Fielding may have been attempting something different to what Richardson and Defoe had already done.

Fielding’s invocation of epic tradition, however effective it may or may not have been, coupled with his pursuit of financial success in the literary marketplace is emblematic of the way consumption and genre are tied together in that the consumption of the novel performed by the reading public is influenced by the appeal of the genre; Fielding’s play with genre and generic expectation, however preliminary, attempts to appeal to the widest possible base. Though Watt clearly values Fielding as a novelist who is well-deserving of his canonical place in literary studies, he sees Fielding’s strides in the novel genre as significantly more flawed than those taken by Defoe or Richardson. In constantly comparing Fielding to Richardson in particular, Watt seems to overlook that what Fielding may be attempting in his “new Province of Writing” is not to carry on what Richardson and Defoe started but to perhaps do something radically different. The flaws Watt sees – narratorial interjection, the individual in relation to society as opposed to the self or intimate relationships, prizing comic intention and structure over “physical and psychological detail” (264) or depth of emotion, “avoidance of the subjective dimension” (273), and prizing plot over character – are not necessarily flaws that detract from the novel’s realism, but are innovations through which Fielding not only attempts to do something new but to play with and blur genre boundaries as well.

In *The English Novel in History* John Richetti develops McKeon’s idea that the novel progresses out of romance, or amatory fiction. Unlike Watt, who problematically excludes Fielding in his assertion that the novels of Defoe and Richardson originate in Puritan tradition, Richetti, like McKeon, sees courtly romantic writings as one of the traditions out of which the novel develops and which, as we will see, influences Fielding in particular. In courtly culture and the amatory fiction stemming from it, against which Fielding is simultaneously reacting and from which he takes inspiration, desire is never simply a private matter, rather sexual intrigue and high politics are often equated. Fielding, however, rejects this equation through privatising sex without moralising it; he takes politics out of the equation and, as we will see, makes desire solely about the body. Courtly tradition uses desire as a source of allegory or satire of

political power and in this deferral of meaning from individual emotion to the greater import of the work, desire loses its vulgarity. Desire in *Tom Jones*, however, becomes vulgar in making lust and the act of sex solely a bodily function rather than an allegorical or satirical commentary. Richetti suggests that one of the most significant shifts in “narrative habits” over the course of the eighteenth century is “the appropriation by high-minded and serious moral writers (Richardson especially) of what I call popular ‘amatory fiction,’ romantic tales of exciting and often illicit love and passion” (15). As Richetti makes clear:

Derived from the seventeenth-century French heroic romances and the shorter *nouvelle*, the amatory novella of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century in England looks at first like nothing more than a simplification and often crudely sensationalized version of the romance tradition’s intertwining of heroic action and amatory complexity. But as it develops in the literary marketplace of the early eighteenth century in England, amatory fiction eventually transforms its sources and along with them the ethos of love and honor [...]. (18-19)

Though English amatory fiction “would seem to have served precisely as an escapist distraction from mundane existence” (Richetti 21) there is also “a current of subversive intelligence which offers attentive readers a commentary on sociosexual relationships and which displays a sophisticated self-consciousness about the moral and social relevance of all this fictional extravagance” (Richetti 21). The narrative voice’s “double voicing” in Aphra Behn and Delarivière Manley in particular offers a “moral intelligence” in addition to the “thoughtless, merely hedonistic characters” while Eliza Haywood’s fiction eschews the moralistic in favour of an “uncritical” excitement (Richetti 22). In Haywood “the narrative focus is obsessively on the articulation of passion itself” rather than “social or familial or economic relationships” (Richetti 38). There is, as Richetti points out, “a social relationship between reader and author” present in Behn’s work, where:

[t]he social realm lies not in the sketchy and formulaic representations of the world that the characters inhabit but in these exchanges between the narrator and knowing readers, who understand just how to handle the representations passing in front of them, which provide opportunity, first, for pleasurable fantasy and the contemplation of rhetorical and fictional patterning; and second, for moral, psychological, and even sociohistorical rumination. (22)

This exchange between author/narrator and reader is employed later by Fielding who depends on his “knowing readers” to recognise the larger project at work in *Tom Jones*. The narratorial interjections

which Watt sees as a flaw in Fielding's work create a relationship between narrator and reader¹¹ similar to that seen here in Behn's amatory fiction. The "bantering dialogue" (33) employed by Behn in *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister* yields to Manley's "declamatory melodrama" (33) in *The New Atlantis*, both of which give way, in *Love in Excess*, *The Rash Resolve*, and *Idalia*, to Haywood's "almost purely declamatory manner that bypasses anything like thoughtful or critical distance from the process of representation and its conventions in order to concentrate on rendering something like actual passion and real distress" (Richetti 42). Rather than offering critique she claims to "[deliver] emotional truths" (Richetti 39); rather than defining "herself as a woman writer not by her mastery of literary language [...]" but by her spontaneous, uncultivated ability to imagine passions and its effects," she aligns herself with her intensely emotional heroines (Richetti 40). Intellectual ability is dwarfed before the intensity of female emotion: "Haywood's narrators dramatize the inadequacy of their writing in the face of female experience at its most intense, extreme, and therefore inarticulate" (Richetti 41); language is devalued in Haywood in part because "speech is marked as masculine, a sign of fraudulent and manipulative self-invention rather than authentic self-expression" (Richetti 42). This devaluation makes the representation of emotionality and passion that much more potent. On amatory fiction, Richetti ultimately concludes that Haywood, unlike Behn and Manley, "promotes the present, the here and the now with a new immediacy" in her rejection of "the lingering resonances of romance," that is, the "aristocratic intertwining of honor, military glory, and amatory fulfillment" (Richetti 48). As we will see, Fielding echoes elements of amatory fiction as pure titillating entertainment, which can be seen as tongue-in-cheek as well as performing on a deeper level, and in the way in which amatory authors engage with and invite a relationship with the reader.

Richetti discusses how eighteenth-century novels reflect on eighteenth-century conceptions of "the socially constructed self" in the context of a changing social environment (4), while more broadly dealing with social representation and social change.

The novel begins as a heightened, almost obsessive, attention in narratives of various sorts to problems that cluster around issues of self-consciousness and social and moral authority and

¹¹ Sandra Sherman discusses the relationship Fielding establishes with the reader in "Reading at Arm's Length: Fielding's Contract with the Reader in *Tom Jones*."

allegiance. [...] Implicit and pervasive, such attention points to a deep, anxious suspicion that life is altering, that things are not now what they once were, that moral standards and individual striving are irrelevant in the face of economic or commercial necessity. (Richetti 4)

Richetti argues “that eighteenth-century novels render a bargaining for identity and authority which is at the heart of the profound changes in consciousness taking place in those years” (15), yet rather than emphasising the individual experience, as Watt does, Richetti takes a broader, social view. Richetti discusses Fielding in relation to his rivals, showing the author to be concerned with “the problems surrounding the moral and aesthetic shortcomings of modern narrative. And those problems are defined in the novels, both explicitly and implicitly, as how to affirm community and continuity in the face of their erosion by this rival narrative impulse that is not only shapelessly maladroit but overvalues an isolated and aberrant individuality” (121). It is the “isolated and aberrant” individual that Fielding chooses not to favour, but rather opts to “demystify” the emotions featured in amatory fiction, working to “classify and contextualize by means of continuous reference to communal and historical relationships” (122). This is seen in *Tom Jones* through the vast array of characters from various walks of life, which “immerses readers in a communal reality and provides knowledge of an interlocking social system” (136). The kind of mutual dependence and need for community seen in *Tom Jones* and Fielding’s other novels is not present in the same way in the works of Fielding’s rivals who emphasise the subjective individual.

Despite the emphasis on community and Fielding’s proclamation of presenting a “new Province of Writing,”

Fielding finds himself in the awkward position of offering an ambitious revision of popular narrative tradition without discarding the central pleasures of such fiction – to re-present contemporary actuality for the reader’s pleasure and curiosity and to submit to the tyranny of the literary marketplace. The entire project is thereby wreathed in ironies that are often reflexive and self-deprecating, directed at his own difficult enterprise and cautioning readers to keep in mind the special balance of comedy and serious social and moral meaning that they must remember to add to the vulgar pleasures of a modern ‘history’ or what we would call realistic fiction. (Richetti 136-37)

Fielding tries to walk the line between critiquing popular tradition, “which he proposes to reform by this example [i.e. *Tom Jones*]” (Richetti 136), while simultaneously producing something that will appeal to popular culture; criticising the very structure through which he attempts to create a successful literary career is a tricky business, as is striking a balance between comedy and morals on the one hand, and the

vulgarity of realism on the other. “Vulgar” is a loaded word and as such needs to be clearly defined within the context of this chapter. In Richetti’s use, vulgar refers to a type of reader or reading, where the vulgarity of reading “realistic fiction” is inherent in the “commonplace” or “unrefined” nature of the literary choice (*OED*, adj.13). Fielding’s resistance to and reaction against popular fiction is also a reaction to its vulgarity, in the sense that it is plebeian and in poor taste. In using elements of the very genre he reacts against, Fielding draws attention to the vulgarity – the common, poor taste of it, often found in the popular amatory fiction he was reacting against – through the theme of consumption, while also attempting to reform the genre into something different.

It is in this context that Richetti understands Fielding’s use of consumption, arguing that it is in dialogue with

a classic satiric strain of argument and feeling about consumption and cookery, and in fact the moment [of comparing writing to cookery] is rhetorical but the ultimate resonance within the novel might be called poetic, as the consumption of food ultimately becomes synonymous with a self-absorption that is innocent in all those inns where travelers like Tom and Partridge arrive but that also encompasses at its most sinister Blifil’s voracious longing for Sophia and other forms of selfish possession and consumption. Consumption, both literal and metaphorical, is a central activity in the novel [...], where characters have large appetites for food, sex, and of course most of all for money and power. But novel readers’ appetites resemble at their worst the voracious instincts of his worst characters who, like Blifil or Lady Bellaston, seek to consume and possess the goods and persons they encounter. (138)

On one level Fielding uses consumption, both literal and metaphoric, as means of characterisation, but as Richetti suggests, Fielding also invokes consumption in relation to the role of the reader, and the reader’s complicity in participating in the “voracious” kind of consumption. What is not clear from this passage is what readers’ appetites resemble at their best; there is a degree of possession implicit in the readers’ “consumption” of the novel, but this is surely a positive thing when considering the material context of an author needing to make a living through sales of books.¹²

Richetti pays particular attention to the importance of the opening chapter and its “bill of fare” metaphor,¹³ which reads:

An author ought to consider himself, not as a gentleman who gives a private or eleemosynary treat, but rather as one who keeps a public ordinary, at which all persons are welcome for their

¹² Timothy O’Brien discusses the realities of needing to make a profit from the sale of books in “The Hungry Author and Narrative Performance in *Tom Jones*.”

¹³ As does Michael Bliss in “Fielding’s Bill of Fare in *Tom Jones*.”

money. In the former case, it is well known that the entertainer provides what fare he pleases; and though this should be very indifferent, and utterly disagreeable to the taste of his company, they must not find any fault; nay, on the contrary, good breeding forces them outwardly to approve and to commend whatever is set before them. Now the contrary of this happens to the master of an ordinary. Men who pay for what they eat will insist on gratifying their palates, however nice and whimsical these may prove; and if everything is not agreeable to their taste, will challenge a right to censure, to abuse, and to d—n their dinner without control. (*Tom Jones* 29)

According to Richetti, Fielding's "attack on gourmandizing is more immediately accessible in classical satiric (as well as John Bullish) suspicion of the art of cookery as a disguise of essence and as a sign of moral unsoundness" (138). Covering up or disguising the food with sauce or garnish, or in this case potentially distorting the truth inherent in the story, whatever that may be, is immediately suspicious as an intentional deception. "This crucial opening chapter conveys the following implicit irony: as the purveyor of human nature 'dressed,' Fielding is pretending to cater to a depraved modern taste for scandal, lubricity, gossip, and vice," yet as a satirist "his aim is in part to undress, to present underneath the sauces or clothing or speech the raw and the naked, the self-seeking 'design,' as he calls it, of many of the characters" (Richetti 139). In remaining faithful to "ideological complexity" and to "render truthfully eighteenth-century English humanity, Fielding will present it 'dressed' in the situational clothing of the historical moment, but as moralizing satirist he balances against that depiction another order of uniform and universal, 'naked' human recurrence" (Richetti 139); this comes back again to the integration of "moral" and "vulgar" that Fielding attempts.

The opening bill of fare consumption metaphor also makes the materiality of the text explicit. Though generally acknowledged to refer to critics, the passage highlights the fact that authors are dependent on a paying public readership. The public, rather than private or charitable, nature of the literary marketplace creates an expectation of an author's pleasing the public, and because there has been an exchange there is the anticipation on the part of the consumer, be it critic or member of the reading public, to have their taste gratified; which palate Fielding attempts to gratify is the pertinent question, and it seems that he performs some rather complex manoeuvres in attempting to satiate as many palates as possible. The narrator references the author's economic dependence on the commercial status of the

commodity he has created, and his dependence on his readership to “read on for ever” (31). Richetti touches on this:

In offering his customer-readers a preliminary bill of fare and promising to please them so that they will pay for the privilege, Fielding is parodying or echoing the language of the marketplace, evoking vulgar readers/consumers who long for the voyeuristic excitement of represented vice and whose insatiable curiosity will keep them reading past all moderation as they seek to satisfy an artificially extended appetite for narrative, such as that catered to by his rivals in the novel market, the purveyors of amatory and sensational fiction. (137)

Fielding is aware that there is a competition of sorts – he has to please his public in order to make them want to pay for what he has produced. From Richetti’s reading, it appears that Fielding has none too high an opinion of his readership, gluttonous and vice-loving as they are.

The attempted satisfaction of multiple palates is witnessed in *Tom Jones*’ many scenes of consumption; Mrs. Waters’ comedic, amatory-inspired initial attempted seduction of Tom, for instance, is one such episode. The narrator compares Mrs. Waters’ love for Tom to the same kind of “preference which we give to one kind of food rather than another” (441); her “appetite” for Tom is perhaps as passing as a craving for a particular kind of food, but it is one she is intent on fulfilling. Yet it is Tom’s appetite and his subsequent preoccupation with his dinner that inhibits Mrs. Waters’ attempts:

First, from two lovely blue eyes, whose bright orbs flashed lightning at their discharge, flew forth two pointed ogles. But happily for our hero, hit only a vast piece of beef which he was then conveying into his plate, and harmless spent their force. The fair warrior perceived their miscarriage, and immediately from her fair bosom drew forth a deadly sigh. A sigh which none could have heard unmoved, and which was sufficient at once to have swept off a dozen beaux; so soft, so sweet, so tender, that the insinuating air must have found its subtle way to the heart of our hero, had it not luckily been driven from his ears by the coarse bubbling of some bottle ale, which at that time he was pouring forth. Many other weapons did she assay; but the god of eating [...] preserved his votary [...] for, as love frequently preserves from the attacks of hunger, so may hunger possibly, in some cases, defend us against love. (442-43)

The food Tom consumes, specifically the beef and the ale – both stereotypically British foods – serve as buffers that momentarily protect Tom from Mrs. Waters’ advances. Tom is sufficiently distracted by his hunger to avoid falling victim to Mrs. Waters’ feminine wiles; she recognises this and delays her assault until after Tom has finished eating, at which point her “engine of amorous warfare” (443) is renewed and ultimately succeeds; once Tom has finished eating there is no longer anything to serve as a buffer between them or to distract Tom’s attention away from her overt offer of sexual availability. The language used in this scene is in keeping with courtly romance yet it is the initial failure of her seduction that makes it

comedic; rather than simply a mock-heroic parody of the romance genre, this scene represents how Mrs. Waters thinks about her own sexual agency. Informed by amatory authors like Behn, Manley, and Haywood, Mrs. Waters' own perception of her sexual power, and her attempted sexual consumption of Tom, is made to appear ridiculous in the context of Tom's eating. The narrator makes a conspicuous distinction in using the word "coarse" to describe the opening of the ale bottle, thereby drawing a parallel between the physical desire of Mrs. Waters and the more mundane physical act of eating with which Tom is engaged. Mrs. Waters' clear sexual interest in Tom is presented in the manner of courtly romance yet there is no political gain to be made in the liaison; in contrast to the socially-focused big picture Richetti sees at work in the novel, Mrs. Waters' desire for and sexual consumption of Tom is based solely on physical, personal, bodily desire rather than political or material gain and it is in this privatisation of her lust that the scene reflects the "coarseness" present in the sensory connection with the bottle of ale.

Partridge is a character often used for comedic effect, and it is his seemingly boundless appetite that instigates comedic moments. In searching for the army so Tom can join the government forces (though Partridge mistakenly assumes Tom is a Jacobite-sympathiser like himself), Tom and Partridge find themselves in the dark, cold, and miles from any inn. The narrator contrasts Tom's seemingly more elevated meditations on love with Partridge's more immediate concerns with food:

They now travelled some miles without speaking to each other, during which suspense of discourse Jones often sighed, and Partridge groaned as bitterly, though from a very different reason. At length Jones made a full stop, and turning about, cries, 'Who knows, Partridge, but the loveliest creature in the universe may have her eyes now fixed on that very moon which I behold at this instant!' 'Very likely, sir,' answered Partridge; 'and if my eyes were fixed on a good sirloin of roast beef, the devil might take the moon and her horns into the bargain.' (379)

Tom's amatory thoughts of love distract him from both the cold and his hunger while Partridge cares far less for the romance of the evening than for the lack of food in his stomach. The moon is previously described in this scene as preventing the night from being too dark, "with a face as broad and as red as those of some jolly mortals, who, like her, turn night into day [...]" (378), thus bringing a coarser consumption comparison into Tom's romantic reverie. Partridge refers to her "horns" which is a description used to describe a crescent moon. Though perhaps a minute detail, the difference between the narrator's description and Partridge's comment is conspicuous given the overall accuracy of Fielding's

attention to such detail throughout the rest of the novel, as critics, including Watt, have generally noted regarding his adherence to unities of place and time. Partridge's reference then, rather than a reference to the literal moon, invokes instead the cuckold's horns. The moon, in its ever-present waxing and waning, is a symbol of changeability, often emblematic of the changeability of love or the fickleness of female affection.¹⁴ Partridge effectively dismisses the love affair between Tom and Sophia as something that will wane with the passing of time. The fickleness of either party – or Tom's proclivity to sleep around – will prove Tom's rhapsodising of the moon's beauty and symbolism of his love for Sophia to be more transient than Partridge's current hunger and when all is over, roast beef would be far more satisfying to Partridge's palate.

Given that the plot of the novel has generic roots in romance, it is not surprising that the comedic elements often work in tandem with the romantic ones, yet in the midst of this coalescence the romance ideals of behaviour are undercut by the comedy of material appetite. Before Jones goes out to seek a duel with the soldier who insults Sophia's honour he "swallowed a large mess of chicken, or rather cock, broth, with a very good appetite, as indeed he would have done the cock it was made of, with a pound of bacon into the bargain; and now, finding in himself no deficiency of either health or spirit, he resolved to get up and seek his enemy" (336). In this instance Tom is physically fuelled through an act of consumption so that he has the physical strength to go out and defend Sophia's honour. The romance infused in this scene through Tom's action of dueling with Sophia's defamer is undercut, however, by the narrator's word choice; a scene that would, in amatory fiction, be wrought with tense emotion and potentially pivotal consequences is here completely diminished by the narrator's use of the word "cock." The intentional self-correction of the narrator highlights the distinction made between a chicken, which could be either male or female, and the cockerel, which is male. The *OED* states that a colloquial definition of "cock" is "one who fights with pluck and spirit. Hence a familiar term of appreciation among the vulgar" (n.1.8). The food Tom eats reflects the qualities he both needs and already possesses; consuming the cock broth and the connotations that come with it is not only amusing but also accurately reflective of the traits of the

¹⁴ One example of this is Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*: "O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon, / That monthly changes in her circled orb, / Lest that thy love prove likewise variable" (II.ii.113-115).

consumer. However, the courtly romance invoked in Tom's action of challenging Sophia's denouncer is undermined by the vulgarity of his consumption; the very fact that he eats, an action perceived as coarse in itself, is made more so by the detailing of what he eats. Like Mrs. Waters' seduction scene, the amatory elements are undercut by the comedically physical consumption.

The "vulgar" elements in the text are also the most realistic. The "realism" in Fielding is intentionally counterpoised against the ideal of the amatory hero; Fielding goes to great lengths to show the extent to which Tom is not a perfect chivalric or even gentlemanly hero. The narrator makes this distinction in describing Tom's still healthy appetite despite his seemingly doomed love for Sophia:

In strong and healthy constitutions love hath a very different effect from what it causes in the puny part of the species. In the latter it generally destroys all that appetite which tends towards the conservation of the individual; but in the former, though it often induces forgetfulness and a neglect of food, as well as of everything else, yet place a good piece of well-powdered buttock before a hungry lover, and he seldom fails very handsomely to play his part. Thus it happened in the present case; for though Jones perhaps wanted a prompter, and might have travelled much farther, had he been alone, with an empty stomach; yet no sooner did he sit down to the bacon and eggs than he fell to as heartily and voraciously as Partridge himself. (555)

In pointing out Tom's robust constitution and appetite, the narrator distinguishes him from those amatory characters who waste away because they are too preoccupied with being in love to eat properly. Fielding's study of human nature presents a more realistic hero who eats when he is hungry and does not pretend that hunger can be quelled by anything but food:

[...] no less false is, I apprehend, that position of some writers of romance, that a man can live altogether on love; for however delicious repasts this may afford to some of our senses or appetites, it is most certain it can afford none to others. Those, therefore, who have placed too great a confidence in such writers, have experienced their error when it was too late, and have found that love was no more capable of allaying hunger than a rose is capable of delighting the ear, or a violin of gratifying the smell. (621)

The narrator places the onus for reader safety in the hands of the author. However satiric this passage is intended to be, the narrator shows a comedic lack of faith in the intelligence of readers of romance and a moral obligation on the part of the writer to keep the wellbeing of readers in mind. The fact that Tom has such a substantial appetite throughout the novel is one cue among many that this novel is not to be confused with conventional or amatory fiction.

There is a telling contrast, however, between Tom's appetite for food and Sophia's; though both are "in love" and undergo fraught periods of stress throughout the novel, Sophia's consumption of food is

more closely akin to the narrator's description of amatory or romantic fiction than the less romantic and more commonplace appetites of Tom. This is perhaps explained in part by Sophia's status as a "true epicure," which, according to Timothy O'Brien, means that she, like Allworthy, has achieved a balance in her appetites, "she wants Jones whole, not just that part of him which idealizes her; and she urges Jones to love her as both body and soul, woman and image" (628). This creates a potentially problematic conflation: while Sophia is, through her "true epicure" status, a kind of moralistic consumer she is also a romantic one; she is a paragon of virtue and morality but also embodies amatory or romantic conventions. The narrator states that the intention of the novel is to create a new kind of writing so as to distance itself from previous and contemporary conventions, yet if one of the novel's few truly moral characters is tied to convention then this intention becomes problematised. However, despite claims of newness, the base from which innovation springs must still be acknowledged in order for the reader to situate him- or herself in relation to what they already know regarding genre and convention; it is only in acknowledging what has come previously that the reader can fully understand what is new, which is one of the reasons Fielding maintains his heroine's ties to amatory tradition.

Sophia's ties to amatory convention are seen through her consumption. When confined to her room after returning from her quest to find Tom, Sophia "ate but little, yet she was regularly served with her meals [...]" (741); the servants "were afraid she would be starved" (742), not for an unavailability or restriction of food but because she refuses or is unable to eat. In an attempt to entice her to eat, Black George provides Sophia with an egg-stuffed chicken which is her "favourite daint[y]," though "Sophia would have had him take the pullet back, saying she could not eat [...]" (742). Black George's attempt at enticement initially works, as the narrator reports that she "began to dissect the fowl" (742), however, when she discovers a letter from Tom in the belly of the bird, "Sophia, notwithstanding her long fast, and notwithstanding her favourite dish was there before her, no sooner saw the letter than she immediately snatched it up, tore it open, and read [...]" (743). The reader never discovers whether or not Sophia eventually eats her favourite dish, but this hardly seems to matter as the letter from Tom serves as a replacement for the as yet untouched meal, which she consumes more voraciously than any food she touches throughout the novel. The narrator emphasises the fact that Sophia *should* be hungry and *should*,

realistically, at least be tempted by the food before her yet the letter, and by extension the author of the letter, take precedence over her own physical needs. This subversion of the self in favour of the beloved is resonant of the narrator's previous descriptions of romantic lovers' unrealistic lack of appetite, and so is emblematic of Sophia's association with amatory convention.

Though Sophia's status as heroine makes her affiliation with amatory fiction acceptable to a degree, the narrator makes it very clear that one of the novel's other significant female characters, Molly Seagrim, is not to be confused with any amatory associations. While Tom is drunkenly celebrating Allworthy's recovery from illness and apostrophising his love for Sophia:

[...] he started up and beheld – not his Sophia – no, nor a Circassian maid richly and elegantly attired for the Grand Signior's seraglio. No; without a gown, in a shift that was somewhat of the coarsest, and none of the cleanest, bedewed likewise with some odoriferous effluvia, the produce of the day's labour, with a pitchfork in her hand, Molly Seagrim approached. (222-23)

After a "parley" the couple "retired into the thickest part of the grove" (223). Though Molly's coarseness is in no doubt at this point in the novel, it is reiterated by the description of her shift which is made of unrefined material and both dirty and smelly from her work; the fact that she labours further underlines her lower social status. The Circassians, noted for their beauty, were also popular as concubines in the Ottoman Empire, which is further underscored through the reference to "seraglio," which the *OED* notes are "[...] the apartments reserved for wives and concubines; a harem" (n.1a). The description the narrator gives Molly places her beneath the status of a concubine, because she is not, in fact, a "kept mistress" (*OED* n.1) but rather a woman who chooses sexual promiscuity and financially take from it what she can. The narrator makes sure to comment that, despite some readers perceiving this interaction between Tom and Molly to be "unnatural," "the fact is true; and perhaps may be sufficiently accounted for, by suggesting that Jones probably thought one woman better than none, and Molly as probably imagined two men to be better than one" (223), while also reminding the reader that Jones is drunk when this interaction occurs. The comedy of the two of them - one stinking of sweat and body odor and the other drunk - having sex in the bushes, is heightened by the fact that they are discovered in this compromising situation shortly thereafter. The emphasis on the bodies of both characters is reiterated throughout this scene: the rather disgusting description of Molly's post-work stench and untidy appearance coupled with the fact that

Tom is attracted to and lustful towards her un-amatory-like body reinforce that this scene of sexual consumption is solely about desire with no higher purpose or intention. The emphasis on the body throughout the narration of their sexual consumption further emphasises the un-amatory description and narration of this scene.

We see this reiteration earlier in Molly's sexual relationship with Square. Tom, feeling guilty about ruining her, is about to offer to financially support her when he discovers her with another man. Square, it turns out, has long desired Molly but, thinking her a virgin and fearing the blow his reputation would receive if it became common knowledge that he was the one to deflower her, initially decides against her seduction.

But when the philosopher heard [...] that the fortress of virtue had already been subdued, he began to give a larger scope to his desires. His appetite was not of that squeamish kind which cannot feed on a dainty because another hath tasted it. In short, he liked the girl the better for the want of that chastity which, if she had possessed it, must have been a bar to his pleasures; he pursued, and obtained her. (199)

The vulgarity of Square's desire for Molly is apparent in this passage, for the frank depiction of his lust and the self-centred and predatory way in which he goes about fulfilling his desire. His "consumption" of Molly is not romantic or evocative of chivalric or epic convention, and while the characters' interaction serves Fielding's purpose of portraying human nature it is also a nod towards the titillating scenes of amatory fiction, which further underlines his need to appeal to the reading public.

As Richetti points out, the novel's comedy stands in rather fine balance with its moral intention, which I take to be the process of Tom's (alleged) transformation, yet it appears that the moral points are also implicated in the novel's use of the vulgar, that is the unrefined rather than the strictly common, when seen in the context of the novel's portrayal of sexual consumption; for example, the nature of Tom's relationship with Lady Bellaston stands in tension with the somewhat tenuous moral growth that comes out of it. According to Laura Rosenthal, Tom's experience as Lady Bellaston's "kept fellow" is the turning point in Tom's attitude towards his own philandering; in realising that he receives wages rather than benefits, Tom experiences a crisis substantial enough to make him renounce his sexual adventures, and indeed, this recognition "so horrifies him that he not only immediately ends the affair but also never has another one. Fielding includes offers from Mrs. Hunt and Mrs. Fitzpatrick to demonstrate Tom's

transformation [...]” (Rosenthal 173). His recognition of himself as a person who receives wages and, in effect, labours “[...] produces the greatest crisis in Tom’s adventures not because it involves illicit *sex* – which Tom has already engaged in – but because of the way it involves *money*, which has long seemed to suggest more disturbing possibilities about Tom’s character” (Rosenthal 155). The monetary exchange that occurs between Lady Bellaston and Tom is the cause of his transformation, and is the pivotal point on which Lady Bellaston’s “consumption” of Tom hinges. Tom’s realisation that he must finally stop cheating on Sophia, which is a significant step towards gaining the kind of virtue that will make him worthy of her, is undercut, though not negated, by the circumstances through which this realisation happens. The reader is once again privy to Tom’s vulgar goings-on, though this time it is a woman’s metaphoric consumption of him rather than the other way around. Though a member of the aristocracy, and so not a member of the “vulgar” public, her desire for Tom, and her overt and reckless pursuit of him is in keeping with the expectations or desire for titillation found in the vulgar reading public referenced by Richetti.

Tom’s introduction to Lady Bellaston occurs while visiting Sophia’s cousin, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, during which there is a great deal of “fine polite conversation” from which Tom is largely excluded and which the narrator opts to exclude so as not to bore the reader: “Indeed this mental repast is a dainty, of which those who are excluded from polite assemblies must be contented to remain ignorant as they must of the several dainties of French cookery, which are served only at the tables of the great. To say the truth, as neither of these are adapted to every taste, they might both be often thrown away on the vulgar” (611). Satirically reminiscent of the “pearls before swine” proverb, the narration creates a tacit contrast between the “dainty” represented here and the ostensibly more satisfying and hearty repast to be had in less high-flown society. The use of the word “dainty” is conspicuous in that it is the same word the narrator attributes to Molly in context of her “consumption” by Square, creating a correlation between the similar lack of substance inherent in Molly’s sexually-based relationships and the artificiality or syllabub-like conversation in the homes of the vapidly fashionable. The parallel positions of Lady Bellaston and Molly Seagrim within the novel’s symmetrical structure create and highlight similarities between the two; though clearly of drastically different social standings, both women share in the sexual pursuit and attainment of

Tom. Lady Bellaston's infatuation with Tom and sexually-motivated machinations are not dissimilar to Molly's, though the roles have reversed between the first book and the third now that Tom is on the receiving end of the sexual marketplace exchange. Lady Bellaston's dissembling and coercion in trying to keep Tom from Sophia, to the point of arranging Sophia's rape, are similar to Molly's attempted deception of Tom when she lies and tells him "I can never love another man as long as I live" (197) when Square is in fact hiding in the closet. The sexual liaisons and desires of both women are detailed for the voyeuristic reader who can enjoy the impropriety of the characters' actions without morally implicating themselves; the personal bodily focus of their desire is highlighted, though this is shown in greater physical detail with Molly and greater psychological detail with Lady Bellaston (perhaps because it is "safer" to more overtly portray the bodily desire of a lower-ranked woman than an aristocratic lady). This is not to say, however, that Fielding spares Lady Bellaston - the reader is left in no doubt as to her lust for Tom or her awareness of the social impropriety of it. Despite the difference in rank of these two women, their sexual consumption and the vulgar way in which these inclinations are depicted puts them on a more equal moral footing.

Fielding's handling of vulgar, bodily desire and the moral implications of it are most marked in Blifil's disturbing intended consumption of Sophia:

Though Mr. Blifil was not of the complexion of Jones, nor ready to eat every woman he saw; yet he was far from being destitute of that appetite which is said to be the common property of all animals. With this, he had likewise that distinguishing taste which serves to direct men in their choice of the objects or food of their several appetites; and this taught him to consider Sophia as a most delicious morsel, indeed to regard her with the same desires which an ortolan inspires into the soul of an epicure. [...] Blifil therefore looked on this human ortolan with greater desire than when he viewed her last [...]. (301)

Of perhaps far more discerning tastes than Square or Tom, Blifil's sense of refinement does not prevent him from still viewing Sophia as something to consume; this kind of consumption is undertaken to indulge in sensory pleasure rather than consuming for sustenance, as Tom does on many occasions throughout the novel. A "delicious morsel," Sophia's description here is similar to that used when describing Molly as a "dainty"; though Sophia and Molly are clearly not on a similar standing, either socially or in terms of morality or virtue, they are both seen as consumable yet not containing any substance. "Morsel" is again used in conjunction with Sophia in the earlier passage that occurs later in the novel: "she had scarce

swallowed a single morsel in the last forty hours” (742); in the earlier instance she is the morsel to be eaten while in the later one she asserts control in not eating the morsel. The shift that occurs between these two repetitions of the word reflects Sophia’s assertion of her own agency in refusing to marry Blifil, that is, in refusing to be “consumed” against her will, and later prizing the letter which is symbolic of the man she would happily consent to be consumed by over the food which has less significance to her. The narrator relates that Sophia is seen by Blifil as a delicacy, the consumption of which should be relished much as an epicure enjoys an ortolan, and though ortolans were indeed considered delicacies (even up until the end of the twentieth century) they were not intended as a hearty dish, but rather one that made a statement about the consumer. Fielding references the insubstantiality of ortolans in *The Journey of the Voyage to Lisbon*, writing that the ortolan, among other creatures, “may titillate the throat, but will never convey happiness to the heart or cheerfulness to the countenance” (101). The word “titillate” is significant here in the context of Blifil’s sexual desire for Sophia, particularly within an amatory point of reference. Defoe similarly writes in *A Tour Thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain* that the ortolan has “the most delicious taste for one mouthful (for it is hardly more) that can be imagined (184). Hume refers to ortolans as items of luxury, relatively speaking: “The value, which all men put upon any particular pleasure, depends on comparison and experience; nor is a porter less greedy of money, which he spends on bacon and brandy, than a courtier, who purchases champagne and ortolans” (“Of Refinement” 276). Ortolans are birds of the bunting family which were often force fed grain in order to fatten them, then drowned in brandy and roasted whole, after which diners would eat them, bones and all, with a large napkin draped over their heads in order to confine the aroma of the dish, thus heightening the sensory experience for the diner or perhaps to limit the visual spectacle, “and, some believe, to hide from God” (“France Bans”). In 1762 Richard Bradley’s posthumously published sixth edition of *The Country Housewife*¹⁵ instructed housewives on the most effective way of cooking ortolans:

¹⁵ More lengthily entitled: *The country housewife, and lady's director, for every month of the year. Both in the Frugal Management of the House, and in the Delights and Profits of the farm. Containing the whole art of cookery, laid down in a great Variety of the Best and Cheapest Receipts for Dressing all Sorts of Flesh, Fish, Fowl, Fruits, and Herbs, which are the Productions of a Farm, or any foreign Parts. Likewise The best Methods to be observed in Brewing Malt Liquors, and Making the several Sorts of English Wines. The Arts of Pickling, Preserving, Confectionary, Pastry, &c. &c. Together with a few of the Most*

The Ortolan is a bird brought from *France*, and is fed in large Cages with Canary-Seeds til they become a Lump of Fat; and when they are fully fatted, they must be killed, or else they will feed upon their own Flesh. When you kill them, take them by the Beak, and holding it close with your Finger and Thumb, the Bird will be stifled in about a Minute. Roast them quick, with the Heads on (without drawing) setting small toasts under them to drip upon. [...] (152)

The cruel treatment of the animal prior to death, and the specific and almost barbaric tradition of eating this “delicacy” becomes absolutely chilling when mirrored as Blifil’s desire for Sophia. His sexual desire is mixed with a kind of masochistic cruelty, which is paralleled in their childhood experience when Blifil inadvertently kills Sophia’s pet bird by setting it free and then allowing a hawk capture it. The vulgarity in Blifil’s desire for Sophia is less about his desire to sexually consume her than it is about his vitriolic spite for Tom and his desire for power and dominance:

Blifil therefore looked on this human ortolan with greater desire than when he viewed her last; nor was his desire at all lessened by the aversion which he discovered in her to himself. On the contrary, this served rather to heighten the pleasure he proposed in rifling her charms, as it added triumph to lust; nay, he had some further views, from obtaining the absolute possession of her person, which we detest too much even to mention; and revenge itself was not without its share in the gratifications which he promised himself. The rivalling poor Jones, and supplanting him in her affections, added another spur to his pursuit, and promised another additional rapture to his enjoyment. (301)

The narrator’s omission, “[...] we detest too much even to mention,” is particularly telling. As Stephen Dobranski discusses in “What Fielding Doesn’t Say in *Tom Jones*,” the intentional omissions on the part of the narrator reveal a good deal about what is actually being emphasised, thus “[t]hrough the window of the novel’s omissions, we [...] glimpse a reciprocal relationship between Fielding and his readers” (Dobranski 636). In calling attention to the omission of any detail regarding Blifil’s intended sexual conquest of Sophia while providing significantly more description of other conquests in the novel, Fielding then invites the reader to share in the resultant horror of this potential union.

A supporter of this marriage is the comedic figure of Squire Western – the loud, blustering, often drunk, anti-Hanoverian country squire who deeply loves his daughter yet simultaneously treats her in a crude, almost barbaric manner. He refuses to allow the marital “consumption” of his daughter by Tom because of Tom’s illegitimacy and poverty, but actively encourages and desires Blifil to do the same

approved and efficacious Medicines, proper to be kept in every private Family. Published for the Good of the Public. By R. Bradley, Professor of Botany in the University of Cambridge, and Fellow of the Royal Society.

despite his daughter's dislike of and resistance to the match. Squire Western compares Sophia to meat that Tom cannot consume, saying: "[...] I'd a taught the son of a whore to meddle with meat for his master. He shan't ever have a morsel of meat of mine, or a *warden* to buy it [...]" (265), thus anticipating and attempting to prevent the sexual consumption of his daughter. Once again, we have another reference to Sophia as a "morsel"; coming from her father it is an assertion of his dominance over her and his control over who is ultimately allowed to consume her while still figuratively asserting her insubstantiality. Much later he again refers to Sophia as meat, saying "a man may go farther and meet with worse meat; that I may declare o' her, thof she be my own daughter" (836). Well aware of Sophia's economic value, not only through the income and estate she will bring a future husband, but also the wealth that could be added to her already sizeable portion by a prospective husband, Western is careful to protect his investment. He initially will not let Sophia marry Tom because he is a bastard, but more importantly as the novel's conclusion shows, because he is penniless. Sanctified consumption of his daughter is dependent on the economic value of the potential consumer. Western's behaviour belies a savvy economic awareness of the value of his daughter as a consumable "good" and however repugnant his attitude towards women and his treatment of his daughter, the vulgar comedy hides a real-world awareness of how the marriage market works; his intention is to make the market work to the advantage of his family.

The narrator acknowledges the barbarity of the pursuit of women in the marriage market when he extends the metaphor of women as consumable meat to women as hunted prey: "But if a plump doe be discovered to have escaped from the forest, and to repose herself in some field or grove, the whole parish is presently alarmed, every man is ready to set his dogs after her; and, if she is preserved from the rest by the good squire, it is only that he may secure her for his own eating" (783). The narrator compares this doe to a "very fine young woman of fortune and fashion" who has strayed "from the pale of her nursery" (783), indicating the hazards present to wealthy young women when they first appear in society where every man seems ready to snatch her up. Rather than rescuing the doe/woman and releasing her into the protection of her family, the narrator's squire uses her for his own enjoyment, thus calling into question the squire's "good" status, while simultaneously acknowledging that a "good" squire could perform this

kind of “consumption” and still retain the nomenclature of “good.” Interestingly, however, this metaphor focuses not only on the eagerness with which men pursue their prey, but on the indication that the pursued creature is to be eaten rather than taken purely in sport. Hunting for the idle wealthy was sport rather than necessity; squires did not depend on meat taken in a hunt for their daily sustenance, but rather would regard whatever they hunted as a trophy. Therefore, in comparing a young woman of fortune to a deer, the narrator implies that there is an element of sport in the pursuit of her, and the rather incongruous implication that the deer, or woman, is to be consumed shifts the goal from attaining a trophy to gaining personal pleasure in the annihilation of the others’ existence or individual identity.

In *The Real History of Tom Jones* John Allen Stevenson discusses the significance of hunting, and more specifically poaching, in the context of *Tom Jones*. The Game Law, as Stevenson makes clear, allowed any gentleman, that is, any man freeholding property valued over £100, to hunt wherever he liked, whereas men with land valued under £100 could not even hunt on their own property, much less on someone else’s or prevent someone else from hunting on theirs (78-79). As Stevenson discusses, there is an element of social mimesis in hunting/poaching in that there is a degree of social reaching or imitation in hunting where not qualified via the law (97); Tom’s aspiration to Sophia is an extension of this, and a pursuit perhaps more easily understood by Squire Western than others, which is made particularly clear after he finally gives his consent to let the two marry. After they have finally been reunited and Tom kisses Sophia “with an ardour he had never ventured before,” Squire Western then “burst into the room, and with his hunting voice and phrase, cried out, ‘To her, boy, to her, go to her. – That’s it, little honeys, O that’s it’” (864). However, now that Tom is no longer a nobody, Western no longer sees him as “poaching” his “meat,” but gladly invites Tom to engage in the sport. More than merely encouraging Tom to kiss Sophia, Western’s comical intrusion on this intimate scene is also a rather vulgar blessing on Tom’s eventual sexual consumption of Sophia.

In creating something new, Fielding inevitably must be influenced by the examples of what has come before him; in requiring and desiring financial, critical, and popular success, incorporation of his contemporaries’ style and content is, in part, necessary despite any personal or professional repugnance. In acknowledging through the narrator the dependence of the author on his reading public, and through the

tongue-in-cheek catering to vulgar tastes, Fielding's "new Province of Writing" displays a self-awareness not present in other generic types. *Tom Jones* is aware of itself as a material object and its status as a commodity and pulls from its generic predecessors to create a new metaphoric and physical consumable. The use of consumption metaphors and imagery as a means of highlighting his own generic innovation is part of what makes Fielding stand apart from his contemporaries. Utilising the theme of consumption as a means of addressing genre, however, means that Fielding excludes his concerns regarding the effects of consumption on society. Written over twenty years after Fielding's expansion of the genre, Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* does not need to be concerned with genre distinction in the same way as *Tom Jones*. Rather than utilising themes of consumption as a way of making generic distinctions, *Humphry Clinker* picks up the societal effect of consumption left behind by Fielding, predicating overtly moral judgments of consumption as a commentary and criticism of the moral state of the nation.

Chapter Two: Women's Consumption and the Nation in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*

As pointed out in the introduction, women's consumption caused substantial concern in the eighteenth century. Worries over what women consumed, how much, and why sparked debates over the foreign sources of these commodities and their influence on Britain. Smollett's *Humphry Clinker* illustrates these concerns as the Bramble party travels throughout Britain and encounters consumption in a variety of forms. This chapter aims to show how *Humphry Clinker* re-images women's consumption. The novel's hostility to women's consumption is witnessed through Mrs. Baynard and Matthew Bramble's inveterate hatred of what she stands for and the foreign influence she caters to, yet her consuming influence is re-imagined in the absorption of Lismahago by the Miami tribe in North America; this cultural and physical adoption is ultimately reconciled in Lismahago's absorption into the Bramble clan through his marriage to Tabitha, making Tabitha an agent of positive cultural adaptation and foreign influence.

The influx of luxury against which Bramble rants is, according to him, largely the fault of colonial influence. Bramble writes in a letter to his friend, Dr. Lewis:

All these absurdities arise from the general tide of luxury, which hath overspread the nation, and swept away all, even the very dregs of the people. Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath, as in the very focus of observation – Clerks and factors from the East Indies, loaded with the spoil of plundered provinces; planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commissaries, and contractors, who have fattened in two successive wars, on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers of every kind; men of low birth, and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown in former ages. [...] Knowing no other criterion of greatness, but the ostentation of wealth, they discharge their affluence without taste or conduct, through every channel of the most absurd extravagance [...]. (36-37)

The sudden onset of wealth through various colonial enterprises results in a fluctuation and blurring of social station; upper ranks who pride themselves on generations of acquired taste are suddenly surrounded by the newly wealthy who, in Bramble's view, do not have the requisite breeding and taste to justify their new economic station. Foreign luxuries imported or brought back from foreign places are thus the source of Britain's decaying social structure.

The novel's treatment of the moral and social health of Britain in relation to its society's consumption of foreign goods, which is both the cause and effect of its relationships with its colonies, has

been of considerable interest in recent years. Sussman argues “that even within domestic spaces, the problems posed by colonial expansion can be perceived, and [...] it is precisely those problems that provoke the anxiety over the dissolution of English domestic self-sufficiency that is one of *Humphry Clinker*’s most persistent concerns” (82). James Evans’ work responds to Sussman’s, arguing that her emphasis on the novel’s intentional neutralising of the interdependent relationship between Britain and North America, which creates a fantasy of self-sufficiency, “denies Smollett’s possible dissent from Britain’s recently enhanced colonial power or skepticism about supposed national self-sufficiency. Far from neutralizing interdependence or erecting a fantasy, *Humphry Clinker* uneasily and satirically represents a greater Britain” (485) where “Lismahago’s North American sojourn provides the basis for a critique of the new world order [...]” (484). Sussman posits that the novel:

[...] primarily imagines the process of transculturation as a threat against the English body, which is in constant danger of being absorbed by a cultural other, or of unwittingly incorporating that dangerous other inside itself. [...] [T]he novel works through problems of intercultural contact according to the logic of incorporation; it imagines that when two cultures meet, one must inevitably overwhelm, swallow, or otherwise incorporate the other. [...] Yet, while the novel vilifies foreign objects [...] the efficacy of non-consumption relies on the power of an individual consumer to discriminate among available products. (106-7)

Evans does not go quite so far in his conclusion, arguing that, “[h]aving seen England and Scotland and having incorporated Lismahago’s colonial experience, Bramble’s family leaves the greater world of empire for the prospect of a rural Welsh community” (496-97). In Evans’ view the Bramble family abandons England and Scotland because the flaws and corruption present are unredeemable. What both Evans and Sussman fail to do is fully engage in how gender contributes to the novel’s concerns of cultural absorption. However, in “Sentimental Misogyny and Medicine in *Humphry Clinker*,” David Weed does incorporate gender as he focuses on the misogyny within the novel, positing that it is only through male interactions and homosocial bonding that the characters are able to avoid the contaminating effects of female-oriented commerce. Weed fails to deviate from traditional readings of Tabitha’s character, however, and as such misses the pivotal influence she has in the novel. While the characters do plan to return to the Welsh countryside at Brambleton Hall, their concerns about the nation are not so severe that they release all ties, as Evans suggests. Nor are their absorption fears as absolute as Sussman makes them out to be. Rather, in the midst of fears over the degradation of social and cultural boundaries and

corrupting foreign influence, the novel constructs a version of cultural absorption that strengthens rather than threatens British identity. It achieves this through the Bramble family's absorption of Lismahago through his marriage to Tabitha, ultimately nullifying the threat cultural absorption poses and rendering Tabitha the redeemer of female influence.

Much work has been done on eighteenth-century women's consumption and corresponding fears of foreign influence and its effect on the nation. The influx of luxury items that fuelled women's consumption and concerns over dependence on colonial markets also fuelled fears of Britain's feminisation and the destruction of a solidly – and solely – British sense of self. The issue of emulative spending, as mentioned in the introduction, compounded the perceived problem of women's consumption in that, not only would women of similar status compete with one another over fashion prowess, but women of lower status would mimic the fashions and habits of their social betters, resulting in increased financial difficulties and dangerous blurring of social boundaries. The hostility towards women's consumption in the eighteenth century shown through this scholarship is exemplified in *Humphry Clinker* through Bramble's disgust for women who cater to foreign and excessive influences.

The epistolary nature of the novel allows for multiple points of view on a wide variety of topics, including consumption. As Lewis M. Knapp notes in his introduction to the text, during the time period in which the novel is set, "about 1750-70 [...] [t]he novel (or the romance, as it was then called) had recently been born and was now growing up" (vii). The epistolary novel was nothing new by the time Smollett utilised it, yet he did make it his own. As Knapp shows:

In *Humphry Clinker* Smollett followed only in general the epistolary form of Richardson's widely read novels [...]. Smollett [...] radically altered Richardson's technique: instead of utilizing one letter-writer, he introduced a group of them, who present multiple points of view, not only disclosing personal problems and moods, but also revealing their response to events, places, persons, and ideas occasioned by their travels. (xii-xiii)

Through the polyphonic nature of the novel, the reader is offered a variety of perspectives regarding the realities and implications of consumption in a variety of forms and extremes.

I.

Mrs. Baynard's character illustrates fears regarding the impact of women's consumption and corresponding concerns of the degenerative effects of foreign influence. Bramble writes: "[...] her ruling

passion was vanity, not that species which arises from self-conceit of superior accomplishments, but that which is of a bastard and idiot nature, excited by shew and ostentation, which implies not even the least consciousness of any personal merit” (287). There is no individual thought or expression behind Mrs. Baynard’s consumption. Her ostentation and excess, rather than a means of expressing taste, is a way to placate her own sense of importance and rank within the local community; it is a way to display wealth. Bramble’s virulent disdain for Baynard’s wife is apparent, shown superficially in her lack of a given name, and though Baynard is one of Bramble’s dear friends he is not spared Bramble’s disgust for allowing his wife’s consumption to financially ruin him and jeopardise his family estate. Richetti points out that “Mrs. Baynard has managed to import the enervating effects of the consumer revolution into the countryside, destroying the very fecundity and rural simplicity and masculine sociality that Matt has experienced in the surrounding area” (191). Mrs. Baynard has contaminated the countryside with the effects of metropolitan conspicuous consumption, destroying all that Bramble holds sacred in country life.

Though the brunt of Bramble’s antipathy is directed at Mrs. Baynard and her ostentatious and fashion-driven excess, she is merely one of many. Bramble writes, “I believe it will be found upon enquiry, that nineteen out of twenty, who are ruined by extravagance, fall a sacrifice to the ridiculous pride and vanity of silly women, whose parts are held in contempt by the very men whom they pillage and enslave” (294). The novel firmly places the blame of financial ruin on women’s extravagance and the men who fail to resist them. Bramble’s hostility towards women’s consumption includes men who are too weak to withstand, as in Baynard’s case, the manipulations of their wives. It must be noted, however, that without his wife’s fortune, Baynard would have been in financial ruin through his *own* extravagance; though Bramble lumps all women together and places blame solely on them, Baynard relies on his wife’s money to pull himself out of debt when they are first married. Perhaps what marks the difference, though, is that while Baynard intended to amend his ways and decrease his expenditures once his debts were cleared, his wife had no such intentions. Her excess continues despite knowing that they cannot afford it; the reckless selfishness of Mrs. Baynard’s expenditures incites Bramble’s disgust, but his greater disappointment stems from his friend’s inability to control his wife. Bramble relates that he “inveighed

bitterly against the indiscretion of his [Baynard's] wife, and reproached him with his unmanly acquiescence under the absurd tyranny which she exerted" (292-93).

Driven by this kind of thoughtless consumption, emulation, as analysed by McKendrick in *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, increases competition between consumers and so exponentially drives women to new heights of excess. In *An Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers*, Fielding expresses concerns similar to those of Bramble regarding the emulative motivations of the lower ranks in their consumption of luxuries:

It [confusion in rank due to emulative spending] reaches the very Dregs of the people, who aspiring still to a Degree beyond that which belongs to them, and not being able to by the Fruits of honest Labour to support the State which they affect, they disdain the Wages to which their Industry would intitle them; and abandoning themselves to Idleness, the more simple and poor-spirited betake themselves to a State of Starving and Beggary, while those of more Art and Courage become Thieves, Sharpers and Robbers. (77)

For Fielding, emulation and the resulting confusion of rank and station causes the increase in crime he laments. For Matthew Bramble, the effects are perhaps not as dramatic, but equally as destructive. Mrs. Baynard and her neighbours offer an example of this kind of damaging emulation expressed through consumption:

[Baynard] then gave me to understand, that he had two neighbours, who, like himself, were driven by their wives at full speed, in the high road to bankruptcy and ruin. [...] The views of the ladies were exactly the same. They vied in grandeur, that is, in ostentation, with the wife of Sir Charles Chickwell, who had four times their fortune; and she again piqued herself upon making an equal figure with a neighbouring peeress, whose revenue trebled her own. (293)

According to Bramble, in pursuing this kind of purposeless desire for fashion and luxuries, women financially destroy their husbands and themselves, weakening society both economically and socially through the trickle-down emulative nature of their spending, which erodes not only their own financial solvency, but contributes to the erosion of social distinctions. Mrs. Baynard's consumption shows this problematic emulation-based spending, which is seen not only through her personal purchases but in her treatment of her husband's estate as well.

As a symbol of his lineage and paternal heritage, Baynard's estate symbolises his masculinity and connection to his forefathers, and more significantly it signifies his political and economic power as a member of the landed gentry. As Pocock discusses, civic humanist writing imagined land ownership in

terms of providing autonomy from the government while still maintaining an active participation in it. According to this ideology, corruption of civic virtue resulted from dependence on the government through catering to individual desires rather than pursuing the good of all; commercial interests corrupted for similar reasons (Pocock, “Civic Humanism” 92-93). Pocock explains that “[c]ivic humanism denotes a style of thought [...] in which it is contended that the development of the individual towards self-fulfillment is possible only when the individual acts as a citizen, that is as a conscious and autonomous participant in an autonomous decision-taking political community, the polis or republic” (“Civic Humanism” 85). Pocock sees a specifically English (and Anglo-American) kind of civic humanism which:

[...] declared that the individual as citizen might be known by the autonomy of his participation in politics, but [...] was peculiarly concerned with the material basis of that autonomy. The function of property was to render the individual independent, and the ideal paradigm – though not, by any means, the only form – of the property which did this was an inheritable freehold in land. (“Civic Humanism” 90-91)

Baynard, then, is the inheritor of this classical republican thought and as such it is his duty to maintain his autonomy through maintaining his property, thus sustaining his ability to more effectively pursue the good of the collective; resisting the corruption resulting from mobile property and its individual rather than collective focus is the moral and political duty of property-holders.¹⁶ Richetti articulates the corruption possible through the effects of mobile property: “Smollett’s novels depict in their relentless, savagely unforgiving energy, perhaps more forcefully than any other eighteenth-century rendering, the unstoppable trajectories of mobile property which makes men, in Pocock’s terms, artificial beings guided only by a demented and utterly unfixed and free-flowing self-interest” (167). In *English Literature in History* John Barrell articulates the precepts of civic humanist duty another way:

By the various traditions of political thought inherited from the seventeenth century, the unity of society was often understood as requiring to be produced out of, and in spite of, the conflict of the various particular interests within it, and in such a conception of politics, the different passions, the different goals, the different interests of men were perceived as evidence of the instability of human nature and thus as a threat to a unified and stable society capable of enduring through time. The art of government was therefore to be entrusted to those who could claim the public virtue of disinterestedness [...] and their task was to regulate or subdue that variety of contrary passions and interests. (22)

¹⁶ See also John Sekora’s chapter in *Luxury*, “The Politics of *Humphry Clinker*” and Robert Irvine’s article “Labor and Commerce in Locke and Early Eighteenth-Century English Georgic.”

The self-interest and resulting instability of differing factions was, in theory, mitigated by the disinterestedness of government, run by those without occupation and anchored to the land. This system was not, as Barrell points out, without flaw: “In the figure of the landed gentleman the disinterested viewpoint was, in the first half of the [eighteenth] century at least, actualized in such a way as to legitimate the limited form of democracy practised in England, by dividing men into those qualified to observe and those qualified only to be the objects of others’ observation” (35). Those without land were thoroughly disenfranchised.

What is largely missing from Pocock’s argument and most discussions of civic humanism is attention to gender. While Pocock discusses property, both mobile and land-based, at some length, there is no inclusion of women’s influence on property. Pocock does discuss the feminisation of eighteenth-century economic man as one ruled by passions and hysteria rather than the “conquering hero” of the nineteenth-century industrial age, and the potentially effeminising influence production and exchange have on societies (“Mobility” 114), yet despite this sideways look at gender, Pocock’s work lacks any in-depth look at gender issues. Dana Harrington suggests, however, that conceptions of civic virtue shifted in the eighteenth century from their location in the public sphere to the private, from being the sole purview of men to that of middle-class women. She argues that:

The emergence of a private, domestic view of virtue [...] served to legitimate middle-class concepts of citizenship by resolving the traditional antagonism between civic virtue and commerce that had long served as a means to limit participation in the political sphere. The representation of women as compassionate, ‘civilizing’ agents in early modern texts, in effect, ‘moralized’ the private sphere and in so doing provided an ethical anchor for middle-class values and practices, including the pursuit of economic interests. (34)

According to Harrington, the civilising effect of women effectively moralises the private sphere, making middle class (commercial) values “safe”; virtue generating from the private as opposed to the public sphere is then more directly under the control of middle-class women specifically, because aristocratic women were seen as “posing a threat to civic virtue” (42). Though absent from Pocock’s analysis of civic virtue, the argument for women’s active and positive participation in civic humanism exists.

Baynard is not, despite Bramble’s exhortations, able to maintain his autonomy and resist his wife’s corrupting commercial influence. In submitting to his wife’s desires and tacitly relinquishing

control of the estate to his wife Baynard allows the corruption of his political self. Having lost sight of the civic humanist foundation of pursuing the good of the collective, that is, resisting the influence of self-interest through the purchase of individually-focused luxuries, Baynard watches as his wife pursues her own fashion-oriented interests before all others and participates in ruinous competition with her like-minded neighbours. Baynard's autonomy – and the independence of the estate itself – are undermined by Mrs. Baynard's obsession with commercial goods. Pocock writes that "[t]he greater the number and diversity of particular goods available in a society, the greater the danger of corruption in which it stands" ("Civic Humanism" 89). The influx of foreign goods into Britain from the burgeoning empire increases the danger of corruption, which, as Bramble continually laments, has already taken hold. Mrs. Baynard's introduction of these goods into her husband's estate, coupled with the fashion-oriented physical changes she makes to the estate, show her to be the catalyst not only of Baynard's financial ruin, but of his civic corruption as well. Weed writes: "Within the domestic unit, Baynard abdicates his rule, and the threat to the Englishman's property rights becomes a private drama in which the wife confiscates the husband's land and property, which she controls *de facto* if not *de jure*" (622). Mrs. Baynard's alterations to the estate are not merely external changes to the appearance of the buildings, or even to the functionality of the estate; they serve as alterations to Baynard's association with property itself. Baynard's lack of any real authority over the estate or within the household dissociates him from the political and economic power the estate signifies, and through this he loses control over that which associates him with landed gentry masculinity.

In losing his autonomy and allowing the steady infiltration of foreign luxuries on his estate Baynard loses that which Bramble prides himself in most: his self-sufficiency. As Sussman argues, the novel works to "neutralize any textual evidence of this increasing interdependence [between Britain and its colonies], and to erect instead a compensatory fantasy of English self-sufficiency" (82); this fantasy, according to Sussman, ultimately proves to be just that – unsubstantiated by the domestic reality presented by the novel (106). Bramble's identity and conception of self are highly correlated with his ability to maintain the independence of his estate, which as Pocock shows, defines eighteenth-century male gentry. Bramble writes:

I drink the virgin lymph, pure and crystalline as it gushes from the rock, or the sparkling beverage, home-brewed from malt of my own making; or I indulge with cyder, which my own orchard affords; [...] my bread is sweet and nourishing, made from my own wheat, ground in my own mill, and baked in my own oven; my table is, in a great measure, furnished from my own ground [...]. (118-19)

Bramble's descriptive list of the produce of his estate continues at length, but this fragment serves to illustrate Bramble's pride in his estate's productivity and that his actions make it so. In contrasting this productivity to the bleakness of Baynard's estate, Baynard's loss becomes more profound and the destructive influence of his wife more apparent. Bramble writes of the Baynard estate that "[...] every article of house-keeping, even the most inconsiderable, was brought from the next market town, at the distance of five miles, and thither they sent a courier every morning to fetch hot rolls for breakfast" (292). In keeping with classical tradition, the estate should be kept self-sufficient and independent from commercial interests, yet Mrs. Baynard renders the estate dependent on the commercial offerings of the next town, thus corrupting the symbolism of the estate's autonomy. Baynard allows for the destruction of his estate's productivity and his own self-sufficiency by relinquishing his autonomy to his wife's control; presaging Smith's rant in *The Wealth of Nations* against conspicuously consuming aristocracy who "gradually bartered their whole power and authority" for a trinket (Smith Book III 512), the functional and the productive on the Baynard estate give way to the unproductively fashionable and display-oriented.

Mrs. Baynard's "improvements" to the estate alter its function, changing it from productive and self-sufficient to a means through which to ostentatiously display wealth and "taste." Baynard's figurative emasculation effectively feminises the estate; through his loss of control to his wife and the estate's shift from self-sustaining to a means of conspicuous show, Baynard loses the potency of his gentry masculinity. Through Mrs. Baynard the estate becomes associated with commerce and commodities instead of with the productivity of the land itself. Bramble describes the house before Mrs. Baynard's alterations: "The house itself, which was formerly a convent of Cistercian monks, had a venerable appearance" (285-86). The Cistercian order aimed at a stricter interpretation of the Rule of St. Benedict,¹⁷ which included the observance of daily manual labour intended not only "to avoid boredom and sloth" (Burton and Kerr 106)

¹⁷ According to Lekai, St. Benedict "became the real founder and father of Western monasticism," and the Rule "was a classical masterpiece of a dying civilization and a splendid synthesis of the best in Roman and Christian traditions" (4).

but to achieve a wider goal of the monastery's self-sufficiency: "All work was directed to making the monastery self-sufficient and self-contained" (Knowles). The Cistercians' strict interpretation of the Rule and return to manual labour, which had slackened off significantly in other orders (Burton and Kerr 107), marks them as unique in their diligence to achieve and maintain their self-sufficiency. In identifying the house as Cistercian, Bramble points to traits and values the estate should still uphold and signify. Bramble describes the house after Mrs. Baynard: "Now the old front is covered with a screen of modern architecture; so that all without is Grecian, and all within Gothic – As for the garden, which was well stocked with the best fruit which England could produce, there is not now the least vestige remaining [...]" (286). The house's venerable appearance gives place to mismatched fashion trends which hide its original Cistercian association; the garden's lack of produce is symbolic of the estate's greater lack of productivity and self-sufficiency. The warmth of traditional British hospitality similarly suffers under Mrs. Baynard's management, giving way to the sterility and coldness of her taste: "[...] we were introduced to a parlour, so very fine and delicate, that in all appearance it was designed to be seen only, not inhabited. The chairs and couches were carved, gilt, and covered with rich damask, so smooth and slick, that they looked as if they had never been sat upon" (290). The room serves no purpose other than to intimidate and stand as a monument to fashionable trends and Mrs. Baynard's ability to consume; the room is a means of display. Rather than focusing on production and the potential usefulness of the estate, Mrs. Baynard renders it useless as anything but an accessory.

Part of what contributes to the estate's lack of productivity and general decline under Mrs. Baynard's influence is her removal of the estate's boundaries. On visiting his friend, Bramble laments, "The tall oaks that shaded the avenue, had been cut down, and the iron gates at the end of it removed, together with the high wall that surrounded the court yard" (285); of the garden, Bramble remarks that "there is not now the least vestige remaining of trees, walls, or hedges – Nothing appears but a naked circus of loose sand, with a dry bason and a leaden triton in the middle" (286). The list of gauche alterations continues, but of primary significance is Mrs. Baynard's removal of barriers. The oaks, gates, hedges, and walls served as boundaries and as means of figuratively keeping out unwanted influences on the estate. In recounting the details of her renovations, Bramble notes, "she pulled up the trees, and pulled

down the walls of the garden, so as to let in the easterly wind, which Mr. Baynard's ancestors had been at great pains to exclude" (292). The east wind, as noted in the *OED*, is, particularly in England and New England, "proverbially bleak, unpleasant, and injurious to health." Additionally, Biblical references and allusions often refer "to the scorching and destructive east wind of Palestine" (*OED* n.1). The destructive nature of this wind is emblematic of Mrs. Baynard herself through the havoc she wreaks on the estate; that the wind comes from the east implies that the destructive force of it is also from outside Britain, and therefore foreign. In sustaining a functional and productive estate, and, importantly, by maintaining the boundaries, Baynard's ancestors were able to keep the destructive winds and the foreign influences they symbolise, at bay. The physical removal of these barriers by Mrs. Baynard figuratively signals the estate's vulnerability to destructive foreign influence.

Increases in foreign imports added further anxiety to consumption concerns in the eighteenth century. Because of a substantial increase in territory through the conclusion of the Seven Years' War, Britain was confronted with a source for new commodities, which was one catalyst that spurred women's consumption. Along with gains in North America, India, parts of Africa, and the West Indies were added to the list of commodity exporters. The one-sided nature of trade with India in particular caused a great deal of concern, as Britain proved to be an enthusiastic consumer of Indian goods but the East India Trading Company found it increasingly difficult to find markets for British goods; the influx of foreign imports without the benefit of increased exports was cause for substantial concern, both economically and socially (P. Marshall 59, 76). Colonial commodities were not the only ones sought after, however.

As illustrated through Mrs. Baynard, French influence predominated as the height of fashion and source of emulation. Bramble remarks on Mrs. Baynard's hospitality:

At dinner, the lady maintained the same ungracious indifference [...] and as to the repast, it was made up of a parcel of kickshaws, contrived by a French cook, without one substantial article adapted to the satisfaction of an English appetite. The pottage was little better than bread soaked in dishwashings, lukewarm. The ragouts looked as if they had been once eaten and half digested: the fricassees were involved in a nasty yellow poultice; and the rotis were scorched and stinking, for the honour of the fumet. The desert [*sic*] consisted of faded fruit and iced froth, a good emblem of our landlady's character; the table-beer was sour, the water foul, and the wine vapid [...]. (295)

The insubstantial nature of the food served to them, intended to highlight the fashionableness of the cuisine, offends Bramble's British appetite. The poor and disgusting quality of the food serves to underline Mrs. Baynard's lack of taste and discernment as a consumer. It would not be as grievous an offence if the food was merely French, but that it is *bad* French food completely reverses Mrs. Baynard's intentions to impress and thus further satirises her as a female consumer, fuelling Bramble's hostility. In illustrating an affinity to French cuisine and French fashion, Mrs. Baynard aligns herself with the foreign rather than the domestic, and with potentially subversive politics. As Gilly Lehmann points out, "[t]he association of French food and Catholicism, and thus its reverse, English fare and Protestantism, shows how food had become part of the defining image of Britishness as an aggressively Protestant culture opposed to Catholic France" (76). In consuming foreign products – specifically, the foreign fashions and art she attempts to bring back from Europe (291-92) – she supports foreign economies rather than her own and so undermines the potential economic contribution she would make to Britain through consuming locally. This is sharply juxtaposed to the estate's productivity before Baynard's marriage when the emphasis was on domestic production and self-sufficiency. In serving French food Mrs. Baynard forces her guests to consume and absorb the foreign, with all of its negative political, economic, and social implications, to which Bramble takes considerable offence. He exacts his revenge, however, after Mrs. Baynard's death in reclaiming the kitchen and the family's gustatory alliance through firing the French cook and ceasing their absorption of the foreign through French food. Through intentionally mentioning that he retains the cook's (presumably British) assistant, he makes sure that his intentions of reclaiming British influence over the estate are known.

In contrast to Mrs. Baynard's privileging of the foreign, Bramble's fierce defensiveness of traditional British food coupled with his own extensive list of solidly British produce from his own estate illustrates his desire for self-sufficiency and recognisably British fare, and his vehement desire to keep foreign elements out. Whether or not Bramble's dreams of a pure and self-contained Britain are realistic, the novel constructs the correlation between consumption and national identity. As Sussman points out, the "[...] increase in the consumption of colonial foodstuffs triggered a concern for the national integrity of England itself" (83). In terms of the strength of one's national identity, as Bramble sees it, what you

consume makes just as powerful a statement as what you choose not to consume. Historically, the case for consciously defining one's self or the nation through a specifically national cuisine differentiated from other "foreign" traditions became a real issue in the eighteenth century. As Brian Cowan notes, "[...] the nation states that forged these empires developed an ever more self-conscious sense of national identity which was increasingly understood in terms of distinctive national cuisines" (197). This is illustrated through Bramble's practice of producing and consuming solid British fare, as well as through debates that took place in America after the revolution where defining a national cuisine distinct from Britain and the rest of Europe proved difficult. As Mark McWilliams points out, Americans' desire to stand apart in their cuisine as a means of symbolically marking their separateness and independence meant rejecting what was soon to be considered foreign: "[A]fter the Revolution, there was a popular debate over the proper cuisine for a new nation; foodways became one site for expressing late eighteenth-century republican anxieties in the central cultural argument between luxury and virtue" (367).¹⁸ In specifically showing his distaste for French food in what should be a British home, Bramble registers his desire for a symbolic separateness of identity, independent from foreign influence.

Where Mrs. Baynard allows the infiltration of the foreign into British society through absorbing French food and privileging French fashion, Bramble adheres to the opposite in trying to keep the foreign out and vilifying women who seem to invite ostentatious foreign influence in. Mrs. Baynard invites the breach of cultural boundaries while Bramble tries to keep them in place. It is the perceived feminising influence of French culture, as well as the historic animosity between Britain and France, that makes this breach so concerning. As Michèle Cohen points out, "France's attraction was exerted not only by its fashions and luxury goods but even more insidiously by its manners and by its tongue" (7). Women's conversation was thought, by the French, to be a civilising influence, a way of achieving *honnêteté* which, loosely translated means civility and gentlemanliness (Cohen 14-17). Though the French assumed masculinity to be inherent, so regular conversation with women was not seen as potentially effeminising, in England "masculinity was not a given" (Cohen 31) so the influence of women's conversation was more suspect. Because part of the point in making the Grand Tour was to polish a gentleman's conversation

¹⁸ For further discussion of consumption in North American colonies, also see Breen.

(Cohen 36), the fear was that men would return to Britain Frenchified and foppish (Cohen 58-59). “Fops were a warning to Englishmen about what happened to men who spent all their time in the company of women – like Frenchmen did. In England, the concern was about men and the anxiety about effeminacy” (Cohen 40). Bramble is not only concerned about the effects of French influence as a foreign corrupter and as a military and political enemy, but as a destroyer of masculinity as well.

Bramble is particularly concerned with social boundaries crossed through ingestion. As has been widely discussed, Bramble’s preoccupation with absorbing the other via the waters and air of Bath and the water and food of London illustrate his obsessive concern with consuming the foreign.¹⁹ The threat posed by absorbing the foreign is one of potentially weakening and diluting individual British personality and national British identity through assimilating outside influences.

II.

Threats of assimilation and absorption are well illustrated by British fears of captivity in the North American colonies and specifically exemplified within *Humphry Clinker* through Lismahago’s encounter with Native Americans. Historically, the torture of captives, particularly of adult males taken in combat, often ended in death and occasionally in cannibalism, but captives were also taken to extort ransoms, were sold to other Europeans, kept as slaves within the tribe, or were adopted into the tribe, often as a replacement for a deceased member (Colley 145, Williamson 21, J. Smith 28, 31-32). Captivity often meant captives’ assimilation into the tribe in order to survive, and this loss of British identity, in favour of the seemingly less refined customs of native America, was worrying to many Britons already concerned with consumption influences.

Ensign Murphy, who is taken captive by the Miamis along with Lismahago, is tortured, partially eaten alive, and ultimately murdered by the tribe while Lismahago is adopted into it, married to one of its members, and seems to make a happy life there. Murphy’s absorption into the tribe is absolute through cannibalism, and it is this kind of nullifying absorption and death that Britain feared in its interactions with the colonies. Lismahago’s adoption into the tribe, however, is perhaps even more alarming to British

¹⁹ See *Uneasy Sensations* by Aileen Douglas, Sussman’s *Consuming Anxieties* and Robert Irvine’s chapter “Smollett: satire, romance, and feminine agency” in *Enlightenment and Romance*.

sensibilities in that, where Murphy's absorption is based around a barbaric act and cannot pose a continuous threat to Murphy's physical and cultural self, Lismahago continues to live and function as a member of Miami society. His indoctrination into their culture is an ongoing psychological process while Murphy's experience of absorption is a finite moment and, though it results in his death, does not impact his personal cultural identification. While Lismahago's adoption is not of his choosing, he nonetheless gives up his native cultural identification and effectively becomes Miami. Even on his return from the colonies he bears the marks of his experience there through his scars²⁰ and so bears the badge of his foreignness.²¹ Though Lismahago's captivity ends and he returns to Britain where his foreignness is ultimately reclaimed through his absorption by the Brambles, the absorption imposed on him by the Miamis is an embodiment of British fears of foreign cultural absorption.

British fears of cultural absorption centred around the captor's ability to absorb and incorporate other cultures without detriment to their own culture and identity. As Sussman argues:

These rituals, although violent, were seen by eighteenth-century observers as the means by which Native American tribes appropriated and transformed foreign cultures. Europeans saw these rituals as evidence of a tribe's ability to retain its social coherence in the face of a colonizing invasion – a quality they found admirable as well as threatening. (87)

British colonisers felt threatened by the ability of Native American communities to absorb Europeans – either cannibalistically or through adoption – and still retain the strength of their culture; despite their alleged cultural superiority and “civilisation” Europeans could not manage the same. As Sussman points out, “[s]uch native tribes manage to bring foreigners into their culture without challenging their dominant social system, and while continuing to patrol rigorously the borders of that society” (87). Jery reports Lismahago's observation that:

[T]he Indians were too tenacious of their own customs to adopt the modes of any nation whatsoever; he said, moreover, that neither the simplicity of their manners, nor the commerce of their country, would admit of those articles of luxury which are deemed magnificence in Europe; and that they were too virtuous and sensible to encourage the introduction of any fashion which might help to render them corrupt and effeminate. (194-95)

²⁰ See James Evans ““An honest scar received in the service of my country’: Lismahago's Colonial Perspective in *Humphry Clinker*” for a thorough discussion of Lismahago's colonial markings.

²¹ Bhattacharya and Nechtman discuss colonial taint and the guilt of importing colonial impurities back to Britain in “Ideal Woman or Ideal Consumer” in *Reading the Splendid Body* and “Nabobinas,” respectively.

In this sense, Lismahago considers the Miami as culturally superior; they are able to maintain a distinct sense of self with finite cultural boundaries because they do not engage in the same kind of consumption as the more “civilised” nations of Europe; they can anticipate what will ultimately hinder their society and so avoid the kind of social degeneration experienced by Britain. The rituals performed by the Miami, of cannibalistic absorption or adoption, do not put the Miami at risk of cultural contamination for the reasons given by Lismahago – the danger is all to the British bodies of Lismahago and Ensign Murphy. However, Lismahago offers this observation in the context of Tabitha inquiring about Squinkinacoosta’s wedding attire and so illustrates that the Miami’s superiority comes from resisting excessive or luxurious consumption and is not necessarily, as Sussman suggests, a conscious act of resisting the cultural effects of colonisation; it is, rather, more about the inherent solidity of their culture. The process of absorbing and adopting captives into the tribe, while it perhaps mitigated the effects of colonising forces for a time, was not created or enacted for this purpose, as some Europeans of the time may have thought and as Sussman seems to suggest.

However, Lismahago’s observations regarding Miami tenacity in resisting foreign influence suggests an interesting paradox. The Miami tribe, on the margins of the empire and subjected to the destructive efforts and effects of colonisation, are capable of absorbing foreign bodies and foreign cultures without imperiling their own. Britain, despite its global dominance in the eighteenth century, is seemingly incapable of this kind of absorption without degrading repercussions to British culture; the allegedly superior society is in fact weaker and more vulnerable to degenerative influences. This is perhaps explained if we look back to civic humanist ideology regarding the corruption of autonomy through the introduction of commercial influence. Increased commercialism and emphasis on mobile property rather than freeholder land allows for easier corruption of political bodies, but, as Lismahago points out, the Miamis’ economic system does not operate as Britain’s does and so does not allow for the same type of corruption. Imposing British standards of political and economic behaviour simply gets lost in translation because the kind of corruption that results from excessive commodities or consumption does not happen in the same way in native America – it is their lack of corruption that keeps them resilient.

Despite their lack of corruption through commodity consumption, the women of the Miami tribe are still significant consumers, which poses a threat to the captives though, interestingly, not to the men of the tribe. Lismahago's depiction of the ordeal he and Murphy experience is in keeping with various captivity narratives of the time though it is significant that Lismahago stresses the women's appetites for torture over those of the men. Though some captivity narratives tell of cannibalism among Native Americans (motivated by various reasons) Smollett's emphasis on the torture and cannibalism instigated by women seems to be his own invention.²² If this is in fact the case, then the Miami women's consumption is more closely related to the consumption performed by British women in the threat their excess poses, particularly to men. Women's consumption in Britain, through the example of Mrs. Baynard, poses a threat to male British power and autonomy; female consumption in the colonies poses a similar threat, but to male bodies instead of ideology. Jery relates:

[...] in passing through the different whigwhams²³ or villages of the Miamis, poor Murphy was so mangled by the women and children, who have the privilege of torturing all prisoners in their passage, that, by the time they arrived at the place of the sachem's residence, he was rendered altogether unfit for the purposes of marriage. [...] After the warriors and the matrons had made a hearty meal upon the muscular flesh which they pared from the victim, and had applied a great variety of tortures, which he bore without flinching, an old lady, with a sharp knife, scooped out one of his eyes, and put a burning coal in the socket. The pain of this operation was so exquisite that he could not help bellowing, upon which the audience raised a shout of exultation, and one of the warriors stealing behind him, gave him the *coup de grace* with a hatchet. (193)

Rather than financially or socially ruining their husbands, Miami women's appetites pose a far more physical threat of absorption. The Miami women are situated in positions of power throughout Murphy's torture and death, and so reverse conventional perceptions of gender power dynamics. Through the seemingly insatiable appetites of the native women, Murphy's already vulnerable manhood is consumed and fully absorbed by them through their acts of emasculation and torture. Through the actions of women,

²² Captivity narratives consulted in this case include those of Mary Rowlandson, James Smith, Peter Williamson, Thomas Brown, and Cotton Mather's accounts of Hannah Swarton and Hannah Dustan. Secondary sources include Linda Colley's *Captives*, Gary Ebersole's *Captured by Texts*, Peter Hulme's *Colonial Encounters* and Barker, Hulme and Iversen's *Cannibalism and the Colonial World*. Interestingly, none emphasise women's particular participation in torture or cannibalistic rites, but many of the Puritan narratives focus on the alignment of the French and American Indians and the influence of the seemingly evil alliance of the two.

²³ Smollett's spelling of "whigwham" is perhaps another instance of his own creativity, as the *OED* does not recognise this particular spelling of the word. Potential "whig" connections, though perhaps illuminating, will not be pursued at the present time.

Murphy's role shifts from the would-be groom to edible sacrifice and ultimately renders his manhood as something consumable.

Evans, however, offers another perspective on the colonial threat to British manhood: "[...] the Miamis' threat to British masculinity can be seen as a threat the British have inflicted on themselves. Without colonial wars, Lismahago and Murphy would not have been in harm's way. Without the ideology of expansion, the nation would not be losing its masculine strength" (491). In this view, the empire saps masculinity out of Britain, leaving it ostensibly in either feminine or effeminate hands. Empire, which is supposed to strengthen Britain through providing more resources and sources for trade and exportation, actually ends up weakening it, not only by sending in its imports and rendering its women and economy seemingly dependent, but through emasculating or killing off its male population. British men seem destined to face the spectre of emasculation whether through the expansionist aims of the empire, through the natives with whom the empire forces them to interact, or figuratively through the influence of women at home.

Murphy's emasculation at the hands of the excessive Miami women provides the opportunity to look back on Baynard's situation in the hands of a similarly excessive woman. Murphy's emasculation is a physical imaging of Baynard's powerlessness at the hands of his wife. Baynard loses all power over his estate to his wife, and if masculinity is gauged through political agency, which Baynard rapidly loses through his wife's corrupting influence, then his manhood is in as much peril as Murphy's. Similarly, Lismahago and Murphy's absorption into the tribe images Baynard's absorption into his wife's culture of conspicuous consumption as well; through the all-encompassing influence that Mrs. Baynard wields and Baynard's failure to stand up against it, he is absorbed into the consumer culture of excess she comes to represent.

Among the women who pose a threat to masculinity through their appetites, Lismahago's Miami bride, Squinkinacoosta, particularly distinguishes herself as a consumer. Her abilities to torture and her generally excessive nature distinguish her from other women of the tribe:

She shewed a great superiority of genius in the tortures which she contrived and executed with her own hands. – She vied with the stoutest warrior in eating the flesh of the sacrifice [i.e. Murphy]; and after all the other females were fuddled with dram-drinking, she was not so

intoxicated but that she was able to play the game of the platter with the conjuring sachem, and afterwards go through the ceremony of her own wedding, which was consummated that same evening. (193-94)

Lismahago's bride tortures men, consumes male flesh, drinks, gambles, and is libidinous. She is a woman defined by her appetites and specifically by her ability to consume in excess, yet among the Miami, and even in Lismahago's opinion, she is not demonised for it. Lismahago's marriage to her, though forced upon him, is a happy one until her excessive nature leads to her untimely death through the consumption of "too much raw bear" (194). In death, as on her wedding day, Squinkinacoosta is distinguished through her appetites. Not only does she indulge to the point of excess but she consumes it raw, implying either a hastiness and impetuosity in her inability to wait for it to be cooked or a more bestial nature where she simply prefers meat raw. The "too much" signifies the excess, implying a level of greediness, in that her body could not keep up with her desire or she consumed more than was her fair share. In distinguishing herself as an excessive consumer, Squinkinacoosta aligns herself with women in Britain; though her consumption is not of imported commodities or luxury items, the principle of excess remains in that she consumes the commodities available to her – bear, alcohol, and captured British soldiers – in excess. Her primary participation in the absolute absorption of Murphy through literally consuming him illustrates the destructive power of female consumption, and when torture and emasculation are added to the mix, she becomes an intimidating female force.

Unlike Murphy's absorption, however, Lismahago's adoption into the tribe, while violent, results in matrimony, fatherhood, and leadership of the tribe rather than death. Murphy's literal absorption into the Miami tribe is far more thorough than Lismahago's, who is, after years of living among them as sachem, traded for one of their own, an orator, and is able to return to Britain. The text leaves Lismahago's reaction to leaving the tribe ambiguous, and the reader is never told whether Lismahago is eager to be traded and return to Britain, or whether he does so reluctantly. The exchange with the orator renders Lismahago's absorption into the tribe incomplete and he is temporarily left without a cultural identity to which he can firmly adhere, or that will adhere to him. Sussman argues that Lismahago's exchange is emblematic of his status as a cultural commodity: "The principle of adoptability thus renders individuals both replaceable and portable – Lismahago moves as easily between cultures as one of his own

furs. In this case, cultural exchange is literalized by the mobility of bodies through the communities that are no longer able to anchor them” (90). His Miami name, translated as Nimble as a Weasel (194), is particularly apt at this juncture of Lismahago’s journey – he slides and manoeuvres between colonised and coloniser, absorbed and absorber, and has no firm grasp on any one identity before he encounters the Bramble family. He is incompletely foreign and incompletely British, thus posing a double threat to Britain.

III.

Lismahago’s absorption into any one family or location is never complete until he enters the Bramble clan. His union with Tabitha illustrates a constructive form of the absorption of the foreign: in being absorbed by the Bramble family, Lismahago is provided with the kind of home that he could not find among the Miami or even among his relatives in Scotland: “Discovering that bourgeois England has penetrated to his ancestral hall in rural Scotland, that Scotland is being transformed from England’s most valuable colony into the likeness of England itself, Lismahago visits the graves of his ancestors and renounces his country” (Evans 494). Through the amalgamated representation of the Union, Lismahago finds his place. It is only through his union with Tabitha that he is able to find a place and community he will not be traded out of, and will not feel it necessary to leave out of disappointment or disgust. While Lismahago is comfortable with the Miami tribe and happy in his marriage, it is also never a life he consciously chooses for himself, nor is his departure from it. In being traded for the Miami’s orator the tribe utilises Lismahago’s exchange value and he is effectively ejected from the community, despite the fact that he is a leader of the tribe and has a son who, on Lismahago’s departure, effectively becomes an orphan. In privileging a native of their own tribe over an adopted member, Lismahago’s absorption into the tribe is witnessed to be partial or incomplete. It seems as though his membership within the tribe comes with the stipulation that he can be exchanged at any time for a member of higher value. However, the historical veracity of the willingness portrayed by the tribe regarding Lismahago’s exchange is highly debatable. In many instances Native Americans were forced through treaties to relinquish captives who had been adopted into the tribe which was, as Linda Colley points out, not always an easy command to follow either for the Native American captors or their captives (196-98).

The scars Lismahago bears mark him as different, and the experiences he has while in North America leave an indelible impact on his views of society, politics, and life in general. Though Lismahago is, in this way, marked as foreign, he is safe for Tabitha to marry and the Brambles to absorb because he has consciously chosen to reject foreign influence in not returning to the colonies. The foreignness of his Scottish birth and identity do not, in the context of Smollett's pro-Union agenda, seem to matter to the Bramble party. As Rothstein has pointed out, the stereotypes and negative connotations of Scots are assigned to other characters within the novel and Lismahago comes through unscathed by the perceived reputation of his country (Rothstein 66-68). In recounting the beautiful, unsullied nature of Scotland that they witness on their travels, Bramble and Jerry in particular nullify any squeamishness that may have existed regarding Scotland as a foreign nation with potentially corrupting influences.²⁴

One of the few decisive actions the reader sees Lismahago make is his choice to remain in Britain to travel with the Bramble party (and ultimately marry Tabitha) rather than return to his son and tribe in North America. As a member of the military Lismahago has no authority over where he serves and is essentially driven by the dictates of the empire. Like his marriage to Squinkinacoosta, his military experience and subsequent captivities are directed by forces outside of himself over which he has no control. Sussman points out that, "as a Scottish soldier, Lismahago is in some ways already the human equivalent of [...] commodities [...] [sugar, tea, coffee, etc.]. [...] Indeed, a late eighteenth-century mode of thinking about the Scottish was as a pool of surplus population, destined, like the Irish, to fill the empire's various and sundry needs" (90). However, in choosing not to return to the colonies, the Miami tribe, and his son, Lismahago consciously rejects foreign influence and, in agreeing to marry Tabitha, he reverses the actions of Mrs. Baynard and demonstrates a proactive privileging of the domestic over the foreign. In not returning to the Miamis, Lismahago acknowledges that he can sustain a better quality of life in Britain than he could in North America, despite the corruption and potential withering of national character. Lismahago's abandonment of his son is juxtaposed against Bramble's acceptance of Clinker as his own; brought up among the Miami, regardless of their social and political purity, Lismahago's son is

²⁴ Evan Gottlieb also discusses perceptions of Scotland in "Fools of Prejudice" but argues that the Highlands are an exception to Smollett's pro-Scottish representation.

thoroughly foreign despite the fact that his father is British. Where Bramble's action is one of absorption through the addition of a member to their "tribe," Lismahago's abandonment in consciously absenting himself from the Miami is a proactive means of rejecting the corrupting influence of the foreign.

Despite fears of foreign influence and absorption of foreign elements, the characters in *Humphry Clinker* often invoke cannibalistic language and imagery; their use of this kind of language, echoing the actions of the Miami, signals their absorption of Lismahago. Jery writes that "it was our fortune to feed upon him [Lismahago] the best part of three days" and refers to him as "a high flavoured dish" (191). Lismahago is the token Scottish character in the novel, who, as Rothstein suggests, is used to invoke positive associations with Scots and turn negative Scottish stereotypes on their head (67-71). Jery's ready admission of the party's feasting on him implies that they wish to absorb the cultural influence Lismahago represents, and are willing to absorb him personally into their family. Highly flavoured or peculiarly flavoured dishes, however, are not what British cuisine is renowned for. As Reay Tannahill writes in *Food in History*, "A Swedish visitor commented in 1748 '...the art of cooking as practiced by most Englishmen does not extend much beyond roast beef and plum pudding'" (290). Heavily or intricately spiced food is something generally associated with countries like India, as part of the spice trade, or France with its long love of gourmandised cuisine. Though Lismahago ends up as a fully absorbed, culturally accepted member of the family, Jery still marks him as different and perhaps as a person they would not normally choose to consume. By figuratively consuming Lismahago, the travellers wish to acculturate Scotland into their mixed band of Britons, in this way constructively consuming Lismahago and presenting a more cohesively unified Britain.

While Jery might be happy to feast upon Lismahago, Bramble's consumption of him is more reserved. Rather than finding him "highly flavoured," Bramble compares Lismahago to a crabapple: "His manner is as harsh as his countenance; but his peculiar turn of thinking, and his pack of knowledge made up of the remnants of rarities, rendered his conversation desirable, in spite of his pedantry and ungracious address. — I have often met with a crab-apple in a hedge, which I have been tempted to eat for its flavour, even while I was disgusted by its austerity" (203). While not specifically "highly flavoured," crabapples represent a similar particularity of taste and distinctive flavour. Bramble finds the recalcitrant Scot

simultaneously desirable and repulsive as a companion. Like the crabapple, Bramble might consume him and then immediately regret it for the effects it has on his taste buds, which is illustrated through his finding Lismahago's argumentative nature and confounding thought process too overpowering. Whether or not Bramble may later regret his consumption of the crabapple, he does fall to its temptation as illustrated by the fact that he consents to the marriage between Lismahago and Tabitha, further cementing his union with this distinctly flavoured human.

Of this union, Jery again makes a reference to human consumption. When discussing the probability of Lismahago marrying his aunt, Jery writes, "I make no doubt but he will postpone his voyage, and prosecute his addresses to a happy consummation; and sure, if it produces any fruit, it must be of a very peculiar flavour" (268). While punning on a standard term for producing children, Jery repeats the reference to humans having flavour, implying that while their children may be odd, they will still be absorbed into the family.

The Bramble party's absorption of Lismahago re-images his absorption by the Miamis. In figuratively consuming him through their cannibalistic language and in absorbing him via marriage into their own tightly bound tribal unit, the Brambles recreate the adoption of Lismahago. His absorption, like his adoption by the Miamis, does not lead to the cultural eradication of the absorbers; like the Miami, the Brambles have a strong enough sense of cultural identity and are, relatively speaking, uncorrupted by the commercial and foreign influences around them. While the degree of foreignness between Lismahago and the Brambles is not nearly as distinct as that between Lismahago and the Miamis, the impact of their union does not negatively affect either party. Unlike his absorption by the Brambles, Lismahago's adoption by the Miamis is forced upon him and he must give up his own cultural identity and adopt theirs; in his absorption by the Brambles one side does not overpower the other (though Tabitha is a force to be reckoned with) and so creates a stronger version of unified cultural identity as a result. In recreating his colonial adoption and absorption, the Brambles figuratively reclaim Lismahago from foreign influence and place him firmly back within British society.

More specifically, Lismahago's absorption by Tabitha re-images Squinkinacoosta's absorption of him in North America. It is through the act of marriage performed by these two untamed and appetite-

driven women that Lismahago is absorbed. Where Squinkinacoosta's appetites result in her death, Tabitha's seemingly insatiable appetite for a mate results in marriage and new influences. Similarly, Tabitha's miserly nature and dislike of waste nullifies Squinkinacoosta's excessive consumption. Through these contrasting qualities Tabitha figuratively reclaims Squinkinacoosta's excessive nature and appetites and is able to productively absorb Lismahago in a way that Squinkinacoosta and the Miamis cannot.

It is not just a cultural acceptance that comes with union, however. Through Tabitha's settlement from Bramble (339) Lismahago effectively becomes a man of property and enters the realm of autonomous landed citizen. Rather than being subject to the whim of others, and exchanged as profit may indicate, Lismahago becomes a man "anchored to land" (Pocock, "Mobility" 111) and property with the privileges that entails. In acquiring property, however small, Lismahago is able to become an active political citizen and take part in the governance of the nation. Should he and Tabitha have any sons, Lismahago will have the opportunity of providing for his family's continued autonomous citizenry through passing his property on. In marrying Tabitha, Lismahago finds acceptance, but he also find a practical means of actively contributing to the nation and establishing his own legitimate political self.

Tabitha plays a crucial role in establishing Lismahago's potential new self and is the means through which he is absorbed into the Bramble family. Without Tabitha, Lismahago's reconciliation with Britain would not occur and his return to North America would signal a return to the foreign, where he would not only re-enter a foreign cultural space with the abnegation of self that involves, but he would forever remain a foreigner amongst the Miami, regardless of his adopted status. Tabitha creates the bridge through which Lismahago's foreignness is rendered unthreatening²⁵ and his contribution strengthens the collective Bramble identity. It is through Tabitha that the Brambles can absorb newness and fresh influences, and it is this that creates a more positive outlook for the Bramble family's potential to adapt to the changing face of Britain. While Bramble would not mind expelling all the women from his life and relieving himself from the stress of dealing with his sister, niece, and various other female acquaintances

²⁵ Sussman sees this bridging between cultures differently, arguing that it is Lismahago's "position as a trader [that] bridges the two worlds" (92).

to whom he seems to be bound by duty or obligation, he cannot effectively absorb Lismahago without his sister, nor can he completely nullify the potential foreign threat he poses without her.

While her interactions with Lismahago centre around absorption and figurative consumption, Tabitha's role as producer plays a pivotal role in counter-acting the excessive consumption of the novel's female conspicuous consumers. Sussman posits that:

The depth of Tabitha's transgression is revealed; instead of a domestic manager, facilitating the passage from field to table, she is a 'domestic daemon' [(77)], breaking down the barriers between Brambleton Hall and the world of commerce. Tabitha's unpaid and denigrated labor, occasioned by her dependence on her brother, leads her to enter the contaminating world of trade. It is for this reason that she is an appropriate partner for Lismahago; she is a domestic entrepreneur, even as he is a colonial entrepreneur. (103)

Sussman sees Tabitha's productivity as inherently tainted by the impact of commerce, however, the difference between Tabitha's productive labour and Mrs. Baynard's destructive relationship with commerce is significant and deserves further investigation. While Bramble rails against female consumers who drive their husbands into financial ruin, his sister is the very opposite. Rather than consume excessively, Tabitha is a miser and instead of consuming, her intentions are to produce. Through running the dairy, and taking (rather controversial) control over it Tabitha shows an economic awareness and desire to contribute to rather than detract from the family's finances. Tabitha writes to Mrs. Gwyllim, the housekeeper:

I am astonished, that Dr. Lewis should take upon him to give away Alderney [the cow], without my privity and concurrants – What signifies my brother's order? My brother is little better than a Noncompush. He would give away the shirt off his back, and the teeth out of his head; nay, as for that matter, he would have ruined the family with his ridiculous charities, if it had not been for my four quarters. [...] Alderney gave four gallons a-day [...]. There is so much milk out of my dairy, and the press must stand still [...]. (44)

The comedy of Tabitha's creative spelling aside, her outrage at Bramble's order to sell her prize cow comes from the perceived undermining of her control of the dairy and with it her ability to make money through selling the cow's milk and cheese. While Tabitha's overt commercial interests are perhaps less subtle than they should be in a culture of politeness, they are not indicative of the corrupting kind of commerce of which Pocock and Sussman write. Rather, Tabitha's commerce and the commerce of the estate in general, are the means through which the estate flourishes and maintains its autonomy. Tabitha does not introduce commodities into the estate, but functions within the structure of the estate to produce

food the family needs, and then sell the excess. Though her intention is to make a profit, she does not invite further excess into the home; rather than inviting in new commodities, she sells them. Tabitha's influence on the estate, regardless of the tension that exists between her and her brother, is a positive one, especially when contrasted with that of Mrs. Baynard, whose destructive influence, as we have seen, inhibits the estate's productivity while corrupting through excessive consumption. Motivated by a desire to aid the family and the estate's productivity, Tabitha's specifically female influence redeems the otherwise negative examples the novel puts forth.

Despite Tabitha's counteraction of absorbing Lismahago's foreignness the reality of foreign influence still remains a threat to Britain at large. Regardless of how much Bramble may personally detest conspicuous foreign influence on domestic soil and foreign infiltration of his personal digestive tract, Britain's growing empire makes it impossible to pretend that the nation's borders are impermeable.

Foreign influence even makes an entrance at Lismahago and Tabitha's wedding. Jery writes:

[Tabitha] was dressed in the stile of 1739; and the day being cold, put on a manteel of green velvet laced with gold: but this was taken off by the bridegroom, who threw over her shoulders a fur cloak of American sables, valued at fourscore guineas [...]. Lismahago advanced in the military step with his French coat reaching no farther than the middle of his thigh, his campaign wig that surpasses all description [...]. (347)

Lismahago dresses his wife in a commodity from the colonies, not only marking her as his own property through his action of replacing her mantle with his, but marking her with the exotic. Lismahago's costume, aside from being ridiculous, is French. While it is a symbol of his service and of his captivity under the French, it introduces another foreign element into this distinctly British union. As the empire flourishes the nation will have no choice but to cope with foreign influences. It is, therefore, perhaps the way in which foreign elements are appropriated and the use to which they are put that makes the difference. Where Mrs. Baynard's foreign food and fashion influence signify her desire to be like the French and assimilate their habits and customs, Lismahago's use of the French uniform does not carry the same kind of symbolism. There is no danger of Lismahago desiring to be like the French or appropriate their fashions. The fact that the uniform is ancient, out-of-style, and too small for him makes the fact that the uniform originated in France, the epicentre of the fashion world, more ironic than threatening. Though the mantle he gives to Tabitha as a wedding present is worth a significant amount of money and is, in fact,

a foreign commodity that Tabitha will more than likely choose to show off, it is also symbolic of the foreignness that is absorbed into the Bramble family along with Lismahago. The mantle does not signify a threat to the integrity of the Bramble finances or to their cultural affiliation, rather, as it is a product of Lismahago's economic productivity while living in North America and trading in furs, it could hint at the economic contribution Lismahago will make in his new surroundings. Foreign threats still exist within the empire at the end of the novel, but the Bramble party itself is not under attack.

The foreign influence of Mrs. Baynard's French food is similarly voided through Bramble's friend Dennison. Bramble relates that upon moving into the neighbourhood, Dennison is taught how to cook a variety of foreign dishes by a neighbour named Wilson, though none of the men seem bothered by the fact that these dishes are *foreign* and not British cuisine. Dennison describes how Wilson "taught me [...] to cook several outlandish delicacies, such as *ollas*, *pepper-pots*, *pillaws*, *corys*, *chabobs*, and *stufatas*" (326). As Knapp's footnote indicates, this list is a mixture of West Indian, "oriental," and Italian dishes; though all are foreign, they are first and foremost not French, and their creation is not motivated by vanity or ostentation, but by a friendly impulse to share information and skills that may prove useful. Unlike Mrs. Baynard's French cuisine, this food is meant to nourish and provide a means for self-sufficiency. That Wilson learned these cooking skills while serving the good of the empire rather than serving his own ends aids in making the absorption of such food less threatening to British bodies. Wilson proves to be immeasurably helpful in this situation, and the intimacy of this cooking lesson illustrates not only the bond between the two men, but Wilson's desire to see Dennison's aspiration to self-sufficiency succeed; Dennison is, as Richetti points out, "a pattern of sensible, hard-working, and decidedly unluxurious rural existence" (192). Like Lismahago's "manteel" from the colonies, these figurations of foreign influence prove non-threatening because of the context through which they are acquired.

The union of Tabitha and Lismahago and the absorption of Lismahago's symbolically foreign body into the Bramble family allows the novel to reclaim the otherwise devastating effects of women's consumption of the foreign. Through re-imaging Lismahago's initial absorption into the Miami tribe, the Bramble family acknowledges his foreignness without being consumed by it, and in this way strengthen their own cultural identity through absorbing his now non-threatening outside influence. While the

Baynards of the world still exist, and the influence of the colonies will not disappear, the Bramble family is able to withstand the potential threats posed to them and come out with a stronger sense of British identity in the end.

The large-scale implications of the effects of foreign consumption are of course only one facet of eighteenth-century concerns regarding consumption. The much debated contrast between public and private spheres in eighteenth-century studies also contributes to our understanding of the effect of consumption within the domestic realm, as will be the focus of the next chapter on Frances Burney's *Camilla*. Burney's portrayal of Camilla's consumption offers a contrasting view of women's consumption to that of Smollett through Tabitha, Squinkinacoosta, or Mrs. Baynard; in addition to providing the perspective of a female author rather than a male, consumption in *Camilla*, rather than standing as a symbol for national or social degeneration, has a relatively small though catastrophic impact confined to the domestic circle. Rather than the national significance seen in *Humphry Clinker*, tensions over figurative consumption through the marriage market are far more localised in *Camilla*, where metaphoric consumption *of* her is just as significant as the material consumption performed *by* her.

Chapter Three: Commodifying Consumption in *Camilla*

Frances Burney was a serious contributor to the literary canon and more specifically the novel genre, not just under the qualification of a female author, but as an author, period. Though there were several well-regarded female authors contemporary with Burney, “none of the publicly celebrated writers wrote only novels; nor were they necessarily best known for their fiction” (Jones 114). Burney was the first female novelist to be critically acclaimed on the same level as Fielding, Richardson, and Smollett because, as Vivien Jones argues, the anonymous publication of *Evelina* in 1778 allowed Burney to “identify herself at the start of her career with a male rather than a female novel tradition” (111). Publishing anonymously allowed the work to be judged without the additional critique inherent to a female author’s publication; because *Evelina* was so well received and the reading public assumed that the author was male, due in part to Burney’s “evo[cation of] the male novel-writing tradition” (Thaddeus 37), the way was made clear for Burney’s reception as a serious author. As one reviewer of Burney’s second novel, *Cecilia*, put it, “The great and merited success of the author of *Evelina* hath encouraged the fair Author to the present undertaking – in which we are at a loss to give the preference to the design or the execution: or which to admire most, the purity of the Writer’s heart, or the force and extent of her understanding. We see much of the dignity and pathos of Richardson; and much of the acuteness and ingenuity of Fielding” (*Monthly Review* 453). Jones adds the distinction: “a (feminine) ‘purity of ... heart’ with (masculine) ‘understanding’” (121); it would seem that Burney was seen to inherit the best from her famous male predecessors. It should be acknowledged, however, that not all reviewers saw Burney as living up to the standard set by her male forebears. Another 1782 reviewer of *Cecilia* wrote: “[...] and we are happy to acknowledge, that the novel before us is of a cast infinitely superior to most of the modern Adventures, Histories, and Memoirs, which form so considerable a part of female and circulating libraries; and though not equal to the works of Fielding, Richardson, and Smollet, is undoubtedly a very happy attempt to blend the characteristics, and imitate some of the characters, of these celebrated novel-writers” (*British Magazine* 48).

Despite contradictory reviews, Burney initially sought to separate herself from her forebears. She writes in the preface to *Evelina*:

To avoid what is common, without adopting what is unnatural, must limit the ambition of the vulgar herd of authors: however zealous, therefore, my veneration of the great writers I have mentioned, however I may feel myself enlightened by the knowledge of Johnson, charmed with the eloquence of Rousseau, softened by the pathetic powers of Richardson, and exhilarated by the wit of Fielding and humour of Smollett, I yet presume not to attempt pursuing the same ground which they have tracked; whence, though they may have cleared the weeds, they have also culled the flowers; and, though they have rendered the path plain, they have left it barren. (10)

Burney's gender complicates the way in which she can relate to her predecessors. Emma Pink sees the self-positioning in *Evelina*'s preface as suggesting "that her work be considered in the same league" (53); through Bourdieu's definition of the cultural field,²⁶ Pink argues that: "[b]y designating established novelists such as Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett as 'predecessors,' Burney 'relegates them to the past,' thereby creating an opening for up-and-coming novelists who, like her, wish to make their name" (Bourdieu 106 qtd. in Pink 53-54). While Pink sees Burney accepting the influence of past authors and moving beyond that inherited tradition, Janice Farrar Thaddeus sees the preface to *Evelina* as a denial of her predecessors' influence, "saying that they were 'barren,' that they had nothing left for an imitator to cull" (Thaddeus 37). Thaddeus's reading, however, misinterprets Burney's statement: her interpretation implies that the writers themselves are barren, that is, their influence on their artistic progeny is something of a wasteland. Burney's preface states that she sees "the path" as barren, rather than the predecessors themselves, implying that rather than treading over old, well-covered ground, she intends to do something different while taking with her the influence of her trailblazing forebears. Rather than seeing *Evelina*'s preface as a denial or disavowal as Thaddeus does, it is an expression of a desire that Burney's work should be seen as a departure from what has come before while respectfully critiquing the now familiar techniques of her predecessors.

If any denial takes place in *Evelina*'s preface, it is of Burney's female predecessors. As Thaddeus points out, "Burney deliberately avoided mentioning any of the women writers whom, as we can see in her

²⁶ Pink quotes Bourdieu: "According to Bourdieu, the cultural field is the: 'continuous creation of the battle between those who have made their names...and are struggling to stay in view and those who cannot make their own names without relegating to the past the established figures, whose interest lies in freezing the movement of time, fixing the present state of the field for ever' (106)" (Pink 53).

journals, she read and admired” (37). The disavowal of her gender, whether intentional or not, that happens in the preface is also a denial of the seriousness of the works of female authors. Though Thaddeus sees Burney as introducing *Evelina* through an overtly “masculine” stance, she additionally claims that “in her preface Burney is claiming to write like a lady. She has assumed a canny transvestism in order to control and extend her audience” (37). Though eighteenth-century society had a greater respect for male authors than female ones, the positive reception of *Evelina* and of Burney once her authorship was made known, shows a distinct shift in perception regarding female authors.

Burney adapts the traditions of her predecessors while clearly building upon them to serve the purposes of her own works. In *Camilla*, Burney, like Fielding, aims to “trace nature, yet blot out personality” (*Camilla* 7); where Fielding’s intention was to portray human nature, Burney takes as her subject “the human heart in its feelings and its changes” (*Camilla* 7). She likewise draws on the sentiment and melodrama of Richardson, and the economic and commercial awareness of Defoe. Gender has played a fundamental part in the development of the genre since Aphra Behn a century earlier and though Burney, like her male artistic forebears, may be trying to distance herself from Behn’s amatory legacy, Burney’s gender and the way in which she presents it is integral to her development as a novelist and a popular figure.

Despite simultaneously identifying with and separating herself from her novelistic forebears, Burney’s own definition of *Camilla* resisted the classification of “novel”: “I own I do not like calling it a *Novel*: it gives so simply the notion of a mere love story, that I recoil a little from it. I mean it to be *sketches of Characters & morals, put in action, not a Romance*” (*The Journals and Letters of Frances Burney* hereafter referred to as *JL*, III 117). Burney’s use of the word “Romance” does not appear to have the same connections to the much disparaged amatory fiction from which Fielding tried so hard to distinguish himself, rather, it seems that she uses it interchangeably with “novel.” In a letter to her father Burney marks the genre into which she has been included: “Now as to the NEW WORK-...[it is] new modified, in being more multifarious in the Characters it brings into action,- but all wove into one,...in what Mr. [Thomas] Twining [scholar, musician, and friend of the family] so flatteringly calls the prose Epic Style, for so far is the Work from consisting of detached stories, that there is not, literally, one

Episode in the whole plan” (*JL* III, 128-29). If we consider the *OED*’s definition of “episode,” “an incidental narrative or digression in a poem, story, etc., separable from the main subject, yet arising naturally from it” (n.2), then Burney’s perception of *Camilla* was vastly different from that of her father, who wrote through her sister Susan: “My dr Father charged me to urge you to weave into one story of interest & length what you had yet to write – he thinks yr book consists of *detached stories*, and that the Public are all longing for & the booksellers depending on another *Evelina* or *Cecilia*” (*JL* III, 175). The episodic nature of *Camilla* is seemingly part of what Charles Burney most disliked about the novel, yet it is what Burney herself claimed the novel was not.

Burney was still concerned, however, to ensure that her *Camilla* was appropriate for feminine consumption, as indicated in a letter written to her father relaying a visit made to the royal family at Windsor; to Princess Sophia’s observation that “the Writers are all turned Democrats [...]” (*JL* III 185), Burney replies:

I now explained that *Politics* were, *all ways*, left out: that once I had had an idea of bringing in such as suited *me*, - but that, upon second thoughts, I returned to my more native opinion that they were not a *feminine* subject for discussion, and that I even believed, should the little work sufficiently succeed to be at all generally read, it would be a better office to general Readers to carry them wide of all politics, to their domestic fire sides, than to open new matter of endless debate. (*JL* III 186)

As Jones points out: “Burney’s conventionally feminine concern to ‘carry [readers] wide of all politics’ is, paradoxically, part of her ambition to redefine the novel itself by taking it beyond any narrowly feminine ‘notion of a mere love story’” (124-25). In keeping politics out of the novel, Burney renders *Camilla* “safe” for the delicate sensibilities of genteel female readers, yet far enough removed from “a mere love story” to be edifying to its readers and sit comfortably among the ranks of her male predecessors. A substantial amount of negative definition occurs in Burney’s attempts to define her work and in the critical interpretation that has followed; more is said about what the work is *not* than what it actually is. The novel genre was still relatively new at the time Burney wrote, yet there were enough authors, particularly women, whose works were not taken seriously and it is against the perception of these authors that Burney wanted to distinguish herself. As Jones explains, “Burney’s reputation and that

of the novel itself is shaped by issues of gender” (111), thus making “the role played by gender across Burney’s long career [...] inseparable from questions of genre, of literary sociability [...]” (112).

Questions of genre and gender are also integrally related to issues of the marketplace. Novels were sold for money, and the point of Burney writing *Camilla* was one of economic necessity. Burney writes in a letter to her friend: “I have a long Work which a long time has been in hand, that I mean to publish soon – in about a year. – Should it succeed like *Evelina* and *Cecelia* [*sic*], it may be a little portion to our Bambino [...]” (*JL* III, 124-5). Knowing that she and her husband did not have much to financially offer their only child, Burney was keen to aid in his future economic security. Sara Salih notes in “*Camilla* in the Marketplace” that “[t]he letters exchanged between members of the Burney family at this time reveal that *Camilla* is regarded as the key to its author’s social and financial stability and success, and the text-in-progress is accordingly modified in accordance with what is likely to be popular and ‘saleable’” (121). Rather than an issue solely of artistic innovation, Burney’s originality is also a means to selling a greater number of novels through appealing to her audience with something new. By the time *Camilla* was published, Burney had created a place for herself within the marketplace; her decision to sell her third novel by subscription indicates her ability to negotiate the marketplace to her own advantage. Pink discusses Burney’s choice to publish *Camilla* by subscription:

Burney [...] was able to retain her position of disavowal, continuing to express economic disinterest, while engaging in the material production of her artistic work. [...] Subscription publication allowed her to [create a new position for herself in the cultural field, that of author-publisher] without investing economic capital in the venture, thereby not only enjoying greater authority over her cultural product than the simple sale of the copyright would have allowed, but also capitalizing on any economic profits arising from the subscription process. (58)

Through subscription, Burney could maintain her “proper” position within the female domestic sphere through distancing herself from the economic transaction of selling her copyright while maintaining control over her artistic creation and putting it out into the public sphere for general consumption; she maintains the guise of private domesticity while simultaneously maintaining the space she has made for herself in the public sphere. The ambiguity initially surrounding the gender of the author of *Evelina* works to initiate this space in the public marketplace.

As mentioned, the gendering of the novel and, more specifically, Burney's manipulation of the perceived gender of the novel's author as well as her awareness and subtle resistance to what was "appropriate" for female readers (and authors), is in direct interaction with the ideology of separate spheres and the respective gendering of the public and private. Thompson argues that money, value, and subjectivity "are implicitly and explicitly gendered" and that the doctrine of separate spheres "is affected by the two discourses that describe and construct these two objects: political economy and the novel" (156). Burney's arguably intentional manipulation of the perception of her own gender, which made it far easier for a (domestic) woman to (publicly) publish illustrates a kind of collapse of these allegedly separate spheres. In his chapter on Burney, Thompson discusses the discrepancies in representations of ownership, where men are allowed to own property while women are "a conduit through which property passes from one male to another," arguing that "[i]f owning is juridically gendered, so too is subjectivity" (157). Burney's novels, which "gender the spending of money" (164), portray women who are perpetually in debt or disinherited. Thompson points out, "[t]he debt her protagonists find themselves entrapped in is never really 'their fault,' but still again and again Burney represents women who, in trying to manage their own affairs, are consequently preyed upon and are inevitably victimized. The principal device of prey and victimization is debt" (160). Thompson argues that "[t]his narrative of female victimization in the public sphere, followed by safe harbor in the private sphere, reinforces the partition or gendering of social space, situating women ever more firmly and unequivocally in the discourse of domesticity rather than that of political economy" (159). Thompson sees Burney's novels as a reinforcement of the ideology of separate spheres, where the domestic female suffers when she attempts to enter the public financial world. Thompson concludes "that the new lease that the novel gives to romance, the transformation from the vestiges of courtly love of the old romance to its new bourgeois form in companionate marriage, is explained at least in part by its function: to cordon off the home from civil society, and to keep capital relations out, to assure that the fetish of the commodity does not poison affective individualism" (180).

In "The Economics of Plot in Burney's *Camilla*" Katherine Binhammer counters Thompson's argument by arguing that:

[...] Burney conservatively genders the divide between the public commercial world and the moral domestic one. [...] Burney [...] would contest Thompson's categorization [of economic men and domestic women] since the point of *Camilla* is to show how 'domestic women' are always already economic and that to deny this only makes women fall further into debt" (3).

Binhammer argues that *Camilla* "is based upon the economic, not the love, story it narrates" (4).

Copeland similarly posits that in the 1790s, "[w]hether with romance, politics, or the patriarchy, the bottom line in novel after novel, story after story, rests in the amount of spendable income in the heroine's pocket at any given moment in her history" (10). Rather than a form unique to Burney, economic plots were, according to Copeland, popular at the time of *Camilla*'s publication. Binhammer defines the economic plot as "[...] the diverse episodes in the novel [that] connect around its heroine's economic distress, with its attendant awkward social *faux pas* and romantic misunderstandings. We are driven through the narrative not by the question 'will she marry Edgar?' but 'how far will she go into debt and how will she pay it?'" (4-5). Binhammer argues that it is "economic negation" (5) which directs the novel, first in *Camilla*'s disinheritance, the ready acceptance of which proves her virtue, and secondly in the connection between "rejecting an interest in money and her mounting debt" (7). It is *Camilla*'s "rejection of financial ambition" that "motivates the novel's central plot" in which women "are required to reject money in order to gain moral value" (2). In *Camilla*, Binhammer argues,

Frances Burney [...] charts the overlapping roads [between economics and virtue] in order to show that while Smith's claim [in *Theory of Moral Sentiments* that sympathy and self-interest are not opposed] may hold for men, the opposite is the case for women. [...] *Camilla* insists on the link between commerce and virtue by writing it into the fictional cliché that virtuous characters do not strive for wealth in order to show the residual, now mystified, inter-dependence of economic and moral discourses. (2)

This interdependence is gendered and privileges men; women, according to Binhammer, cannot be economically self-interested and maintain their virtue.

As many novels of the latter half of the eighteenth century demonstrate, "acting out of virtue is imagined to come at the cost of financial health for women. Burney's novel reveals these costs, but it also shows how virtue *necessarily* weaves its way through economic transactions" (Binhammer 2-3).²⁷ Rather

²⁷ Though uncited, Binhammer's argument seems to draw on the work of Miranda Burgess in "Courting Ruin: The Economic Romances of Frances Burney" and *British Fiction and the Production of Social Order*, where she argues that Burney critiques her society's equation of credit and virtue, where a

than being separate, as in the debates between commerce and virtue seen previously in Pocock's discussion of civic humanism or in the "Adam Smith Problem," issues of commerce and morality are intertwined. According to Binhammer, *Camilla* is a critique of the idea that a woman's virtue is demonstrated through a disavowal of wealth because the two are already interdependent; a woman's rejection of wealth leads to "debt and despair" (2), but rejection of "financial ambition" in men "functions as a form of moral capital" (2). Through *Camilla* Burney seeks to challenge these "gendered disparities" (3).

According to Binhammer, Camilla's "rejection of financial ambition" (8) causes all of her problems: were she allowed to have money, or keep the money she has (rather than, for instance, selflessly giving it to her brother Lionel) she would not go into debt or have the wide variety of misunderstandings with Edgar that occur throughout the novel. However, because she is not allowed to keep money and keep her virtue, she must either give it away or refuse it. The "logic of affirming virtue by denying financial ambition ultimately fetishizes money" (8) in that the denial gives importance to the financial ambition; virtue is affirmed by an absence which comes to take greater importance through the fact of its absence than does the presence of the virtue. The "economic transactions become symbols of social and moral relations, and money's value as universal symbol in commodity exchanges is repressed and silenced. In *Camilla*, buying a dress, a ticket to a play, a small gift, is never about the commodity but about its moral resonances" (Binhammer 8). This fetishisation is critiqued by Burney "through its repeated representation of events where not talking about money as money entraps the heroine" (Binhammer 8), and ultimately, "[t]he economic plot demystifies the moral costs of living and attempts to reattach them to their monetary value. In the end, *Camilla* stands as a telling reminder that sometimes a guinea is just a guinea" (17). Because Camilla cannot speak about money or debt without compromising perceptions of her virtue her financial troubles worsen, as does her peace of mind. "Money clearly mediates her relations to [...] men, but social propriety requires her to act as if it does not, which only leaves her with the negative option of not acting at all" (Binhammer 7). It is only through her marriage to Edgar that her debts are finally

woman's value is unstable because tied to the fluctuating demand of the market. Burgess's work will be more thoroughly outlined in chapter five. Both draw from the work of John Barrell.

rectified and the economic plot is resolved (Binhammer 12). As Binhammer makes clear, “[h]aving money and having virtue may be emerging as separate events in late-eighteenth century moral discourse for men, but for women, they are linked through marriage” (16); although Camilla’s financial situation is remedied through her marriage to Edgar, “the so-called happy ending is only possible with a willful forgetting of the material and financial plots that have come before” (16). Binhammer suggests that Burney cautions women not to “forget this materiality” (16) and “calls upon women to remember the money” (18), and, it would seem, to talk about it.

However, Binhammer’s observation that Camilla cannot or will not speak of her financial distress is not entirely accurate. Though it is true that Camilla is, for example, horribly embarrassed to admit to Mrs. Arlbery that she has no money, she quite openly discusses her initial debts with her sisters who try to aid her in loaning her as much money as they are able. Binhammer asserts that Camilla “reject[s] an interest in money and her mounting debt,” though a significant portion of the latter half of the novel is spent recounting Camilla’s anxiety, worry, and near madness because of her extraordinary interest in her debts and money issues. Similarly, to say that Camilla “rejects financial ambition” is not entirely true either because Camilla possesses no financial ambition and therefore has nothing to reject. Camilla’s absence of ambition is evidenced in how happily she relinquishes her uncle’s promised fortune in favour of her unfortunate sister, Eugenia and in her intention to remain unmarried - and without the fortune a husband might bring - to continue living with and entertaining her uncle. The novel clearly has dual economic and romantic plots, but the economic one is not something in which Camilla intentionally involves herself; in entering “the world,” she is necessarily thrown into commercial interactions but, in her very lack of any ambition to participate or profit from it, she suffers through her naïveté and, as we will see later, at the hands of others.

Rather than seeing support for or refutation of the ideology of separate spheres in *Camilla*, Claudia Johnson argues in *Equivocal Beings* for a further complication of gender boundaries and interactions. Though Binhammer mentions Johnson’s work as an example of how critics “ground their readings in the mistaken assumption that *Camilla* follows a courtship plot” rather than an economic one (Binhammer 4), Johnson’s work, which focuses on the political as opposed to the economic, presents

some intriguing complications when Binhammer's economic reading is brought into play. Johnson argues that Burney, along with other female writers of the 1790s, was uneasy "about the masculinization of sentiment brought about in response to the French Revolution" (145). *Camilla* (and *The Wanderer*) were composed in:

an intensely repressive period of political reaction. The reaction made it urgent to venerate the men of feeling who [...] ensured the durability of the social order by virtue of the sentimental sway – the eliciting of loyalty, gratitude, deference, solicitude, endearment – they exerted over subordinates. Coming at the end of a sentimental tradition which had been strategically deployed in order to redefine masculinity and re-form political subjects, Burney's later novels unfold amidst conditions that both promote and prohibit female suffering: having appropriated legitimate affectivity, male sentimentality throws female feeling, indeed female subjectivity itself, into doubt – as faked, frivolous, undutiful, wayward. (Johnson 142)

As men have appropriated not only the role of the sentimental individual but also of affected sentimentality, women are left with "only two choices: either the equivocal or the hyperfeminine" (Johnson 12); they must go to either extreme of gendered behaviour in order to find a role to fill, hence *Camilla*'s extraordinary hysteria induced by her sense of guilt. This near-death experience is instigated, however, by her debts, brought about through her interactions with the public commercial sphere and is the major crisis of the economic plot described by Binhammer. *Camilla*'s hyperfeminine reaction results from her economic interaction. The suspicion of the legitimacy of female feeling, Johnson points out, also leads to questioning of women's roles in general; as with Thompson, female subjectivity becomes a contentious issue though for Johnson there is greater ambiguity in Burney's intention in *Camilla* as well as in the ways in which character gender is presented and how characters interact as a result. Though the instability of the female subject does not disrupt the gender hierarchy in Johnson's reading, it does play with traditional gender characteristics; though there is a degree of instability in the ostensibly separate domestic and public spheres, the novel, for Johnson, ultimately seems to uphold this separation despite the instabilities present. Johnson sees "gender disruptions" throughout the novel resulting from male sentimentality, such as the reversal between Mr. and Mrs. Tyrold, where "the once classically masculine virtues [...] fall to the sturdy wife" while the "good husband is 'exalted' in his possession of virtues such as gentleness, compassion, mildness, indulgence, and softness" (Johnson 147), Sir Hugh's "maternal" appropriation (Johnson 151), and Eugenia's "female manhood" created through the "immasculating

rigors” of a classical education (Johnson 152). Yet in the midst of these disruptions, order is still maintained; as Johnson argues, Mrs. Tyrold, for instance, still obeys her husband albeit with “covert frustration” (148) at his softness and acquiescence to his ridiculous brother despite her better judgment.

The seeming fluctuation of gender spheres and reversal of gender traits integral to Johnson’s discussion of identities is analysed in more material and economic terms by Kowaleski-Wallace in *Consuming Subjects* through the context of eighteenth-century shopping, particularly in the dynamic created between shopkeeper and customer. As Kowaleski-Wallace explains, prior to the end of the seventeenth century all interaction between customer and seller took place outside, in “markets, fairs, or exchanges,” or through an itinerant peddler (79). “The tendency toward indoor shopping was matched by an interiorization of the selling process. What had formerly occurred on the outside, became, both literally and metaphorically, an interiorized phenomenon. Because no prices were affixed to goods, buyer and seller alike participated in a process of psychological ‘reading,’ each trying to assess the other” (81). The shift to shopping indoors led to a completely new set of rules for interaction which were outlined in merchants’ trade manuals and directories. The behaviour with which a male shopkeeper approached and interacted with female customers, as Kowaleski-Wallace argues, assumed feminine qualities. In acting meek, submissive, and passive in the face of customer demands the shopkeeper appears feminised, yet the mastery with which the shopkeeper employs this behaviour to manipulate the customer into buying belies the perceived effeminacy; “He becomes, in short, a more masterful man in adopting a ‘feminized’ countenance” (Kowaleski-Wallace 84-85). Kowaleski-Wallace points out:

While all sellers were not male and all buyers were not female, each participant in the retail process was assigned a gender-marked position. The seller was most often cast in the dominant, or masculine, role of the seducer and the buyer, characterized either by her malleability or by her disruptive desires, as feminine. In the parlance of the time, the buyer became the one to be ‘seduced’ as well as mastered. (*Consuming Subjects* 86)

In her discussion of eighteenth-century shopping, Helen Berry similarly notes the sexual undertones of shopping through “the rituals of flattery, and indeed flirtation” (390) that preceded actual negotiation of price.

Shopping itself was relatively new as a leisure activity in the eighteenth century. The *OED* records the first usage of “shopping” in 1764, with the second in 1782 attributed to Frances Burney’s

journal. As we have seen, consumption of luxuries or in excess was a problematic topic of debate throughout the eighteenth century, but shopping as a leisure activity, engaged in singly or as part of a group, did not receive the same condemnation or elicit the same kind of anxiety. Shopping that resulted in an excess of expenditure, thus potentially revealing conspicuous consumption, would have been problematic from society's viewpoint, but as Claire Walsh points out, "[n]either pleasure, fashionability, nor consumption itself were perceived as the problem in shopping, but rather a lack of dignity, the wasting of others' time and resources, and an absence of personal restraint, all of which might lead to excess and familial and national ruin (the common themes of the contemporary debate on luxury)" (165). As Walsh makes clear, any breach of decorum while shopping was of greater concern than the act of shopping itself; rowdiness, "exhibiting poor-taste, showing rudeness to shop staff, damaging goods by rummaging through them, and having poor shopping skills, such as not haggling the price down low enough," lack of decisiveness, or wasting the shopkeeper's time by not making a purchase were all considered poor behaviours (Walsh 164).

The seemingly feminised shopkeeper is contrasted against the recurrent figure of the disruptive shopper, who is nearly always female and "brings chaos not only to the shop but to the entire commercial transaction as well" (Kowaleski-Wallace 85). Again, playing against gender stereotypes, these disruptive female shoppers caused problems through acting counter to the expected behaviour of their gender, both in terms of the disruption caused and in the *lack* of expenditure on their part. From the shopkeeper's perspective in the context of shopping, conspicuous consumption or female excess would not be a detrimental practice, rather, it would provide the shopkeeper with greater profits; a shopper who fails to purchase but makes the shopkeeper believe that she will is far more problematic.

Andrea Henderson similarly notes, "appreciative looking [browsing] without the intention to spend is patently considered vulgar" ("Commerce" 76). According to Berry:

Shopping in the eighteenth century was neither as straightforward nor as familiar an activity as one might assume; it required a considerable amount of social skill and economic nous on the part of the consumer. Viewed in this light, the endless modest purchases and prices chronicled by gentlewomen in their private correspondence and personal accounts read less as proof of their inclination to luxury, nor the 'triviality' of their lives, than a proud record of their almost daily ability to negotiate the rules of polite consumption to their own social and economic advantage. (393)

Polite shopping, as Berry, Walsh, Henderson, and Kowaleski-Wallace make clear, was an accomplishment; though not on par with more traditional female accomplishments like speaking French or playing an instrument, effective and correct interaction in a shop which resulted in a purchase that pleased both parties was an achievement. As Maxine Berg puts it, “[b]uying became a skill, a form of enlightened knowledge. The shop was a public space for mixed sociability, a setting for developing gesture, manners, and conversation” (266).

The fact that shops were public places and yet acceptable for young women to go to alone marks them as a bit of an oddity: a site where the domestic and public spheres overlap. The bookshops in *Camilla* are not only locations where books can be bought, but are also spaces for socialising, holding public raffles, and in the case of Sir Theophilus Jarard, a space for taking a nap. As Berry notes, the eponymous heroine of Burney’s *Cecilia* takes great pleasure in her solitary shopping ventures. Tired of the constant socialising of the Harrels, Cecilia makes a stand for her own solitary enjoyments, which include reading, preceded by a lengthy and expensive trip to the booksellers: “Her next solicitude was to furnish herself with a well-chosen collection of books: and this employment, which to a lover of literature, young and ardent in its pursuit, is perhaps the mind’s first luxury, proved a source of entertainment so fertile and delightful that it left her nothing to wish” (*Cecilia* 103). A paragon of virtue, Cecilia’s solitary shopping trips show the propriety of being in a shop unattended, though given her near-perfection and the absence of detail regarding her interaction with the shopkeepers, Cecilia is also adept at polite shopping.

Though most historians and critics seem to agree on the level of social acuity necessary for successful or proper shopping, there are slightly differing accounts on the role of browsing. As seen in Walsh’s analysis, shopping without the intent to buy was effectively breaking the rules of polite shopping, yet Berry and Berg suggest that browsing was perfectly acceptable. “The cleanliness and convenience of the environment [widened pavements for pedestrians to stop and look through shop windows], and civil sociability of shopkeepers, helped to make browsing a polite activity” (Berry 382). Berry goes on:

In an era before quality control and extensive use of brand names, the expectation was that browsing would be a visual and tactile experience, with proper scrutiny and inspection of the goods on sale. [...] The experience of shopping then, even more than today, was bound up with sensory discernment: sight, touch and even smell were important means of gauging first hand the

quality of the goods on offer. Some eighteenth-century women turned browsing into an art form, and a distinctive pleasure in its own right. (387)

Berg notes that Josiah Wedgwood “divided spaces with their counters intended for buying from areas set aside for browsing and socializing” (269). The acceptableness of browsing in these two historical analyses stands in contrast to Daniel Defoe’s much earlier 1726 account in *The Complete English Tradesman, in Familiar Letters* in which he acknowledges the poor behaviour of female shoppers who handle merchandise but do not buy, yet insists that the shopkeeper must maintain his temper and good humour:

I have heard that some Ladies, and those too persons of good note, have taken their coaches and spent a whole afternoon in *Ludgate-street*, or *Covent-Garden*, only to divert themselves in going from one mercer’s shop to another, to look upon their fine silks, and to rattle and banter the journeymen and shop-keepers, having not so much as the least occasion, much less intention to buy any thing; nay, not so much as carrying any money out with them to buy any thing if they fancied it: yet this the mercers who understand themselves know their business too well to resent, nor if they really knew it, would they take the least notice of it, but perhaps tell the Ladies they were welcome to look upon their goods; that it was their business to shew them, and that if they did not come to buy now, they might see they were furnish’d to please them when they might have occasion. [...] But let it be how and which way it will, whether mercer or draper, or what trade you please, the man that stands behind the counter must be all courtesy, civility, and good manners; he must not be affronted, or any way moved by any manner of usage [...]. (104-05)

Defoe here relays accounts of women who browse for pure entertainment, and while it is clear he does not like the practice, realises it is part of the shopkeeper’s role to put up with it because it could lead to a future sale or at least keep the ladies from spreading negative publicity by being rude. Defoe’s advice is particularly interesting in light of Kowaleski-Wallace’s account of the shopkeeper’s seeming effeminacy in his gentleness and self-effacement, which is one representation of how commerce drives the feminisation of manners; Defoe makes clear the attributes and qualities the effective shopkeeper must maintain: “if he sees himself ill used, he must wink, and not see it; he must at least not appear to see it, nor any way shew dislike or distaste; if he does, he reproaches not only himself, but his shop, and puts an ill name upon the general usage of customers in it [...]” (105). In order to maintain the reputation of his shop, the shopkeeper must adopt a persona that, while good for business, may be personally difficult and counter to his actual personality.²⁸

²⁸ The performativity of the shopkeeper’s role in the face of abuse from customers is similar to the performativity of femininity and gender in general in *Camilla*, as analysed by Salih in “*Camilla and The Wanderer*.” Gillian Skinner similarly investigates creative performativity and the performance of manners in “Professionalism, Performance, and Private Theatricals in Frances Burney’s *The Wanderer*.”

The Southampton shopping scene demonstrates the importance of adhering to rules of polite shopping through the physical and social danger that results from any deviation. Camilla is ignorant of the rules of polite consumption which results in the unnerving attention she and Mrs. Mittin receive through consistently browsing without buying:

This pretext [of asking what there is to see in the town] proved so fertile to her [Mrs. Mittin] of entertainment, in the opportunity it afforded of taking a near view of the various commodities exposed to sale, that while she entered almost every shop, with inquiries of what was worth seeing, she attended to no answer nor information, but having examined and admired all the goods within sight or reach, walked off, to obtain, by similar means, a similar privilege further on; boasting to Camilla, that, by this clever device they might see all that was smartest, without the expence of buying any thing. (607)

The various shopkeepers quickly learn that the women are not taking their advice regarding local places of interest, and observation of their progression through every shop in town results in suspicions that they are either mad or shoplifters; bets are placed as to which they are, much to the mortification of Edgar who witnesses the ordeal, and Camilla, who attracts the particular and unwelcomed notice of some of the men involved. In not observing the rules of polite shopping, the results of which cast her character and virtue into doubt, Camilla is further distanced from Edgar, his doubt as to her virtue arising from her becoming a spectacle; thus it is two rules of social behaviour that Camilla breaks and Edgar observes: her impolite shopping and her improper display as a public spectacle. The behaviour of both Mrs. Mittin and Camilla in the shops marks them as suspicious because they do not engage or interact with the salesmen: “[...] they are expected to pay attention to the salesman, readily yielding themselves to his control as he presents the goods and speaks of their features” but neither woman does this (Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects* 94), rather, Mrs. Mittin “attended to no answer nor information.” In not paying attention to the services offered by the salesman, which she initially requested, Mrs. Mittin creates “[...] a scenario where disciplined masculine retail practice opposes disorderly feminine desire [and] threatens the established order. Because she looks without paying, she disrupts a male attempt at economic control” (Kowaleski-Wallace, *Consuming Subjects* 94). Henderson similarly argues that “[i]n *Camilla*, casual shopping provides the paradigm for a form of sexual desire that is self-serving, calculating, and fickle. The desire to see everything while focusing on nothing suggests both a promiscuity of interest and an ultimate aloofness” (“Commerce” 77). It would seem, however, that in browsing – looking without purchasing –

Mrs. Mittin and Camilla display an *absence* of desire. Making a purchase would indicate the overriding power and fulfillment of desire for a specific object; the absence of a purchase indicates an absence of desire or the presence of self-restraint, either of which does not aid the shopkeeper's goal of making a sale. Though Kowaleski-Wallace argues that Mrs. Mittin is not the somewhat evil character she is often perceived to be, it is undeniable that her actions often put Camilla in awkward and financially compromising situations. However, in this particular scene Kowaleski-Wallace argues that as a result of her vacancy of mind and unwillingness to interact with the shopkeepers, Camilla almost becomes commodified:

Burney's narrative initially suggests that Camilla in the shop takes on the very associations of the commodities with which she finds herself surrounded: once Camilla appears in the shop, the men are able to project a series of associations onto her body – an otherness tainted by the hint of the illicit, as well as a luxury tied to an enticing display of availability. However, while the narrative moves in the direction of this connection, it stops short of making it explicit. In the end, this novel resists any facile statement about the heroine's status in relation to the world of goods, while the novelist refuses to render Camilla the simple victim of her circumstances. (96)

The gaze of the shopkeepers, and subsequently of the men who follow Camilla and Mrs. Mittin to the bathing house, becomes, according to Kowaleski-Wallace, appropriative, ascribing sexual availability and receptivity of desire to Camilla. As a commodity, as something to be "shopped" for, Camilla takes on the attributes of other shopped for commodified objects, and shopping, as Berg points out, "was an experience of private fantasy and imagined desire" (266); the commodification Kowaleski-Wallace sees is countered by Binhammer's position that Camilla is *not* commodified, that "sometimes a guinea is just a guinea." Though, as Kowaleski-Wallace and Berg point out, shopping was a process of assessment by both the shop-keeper and the customer, Camilla's mere presence in the shop does not automatically equate her with the commodities present; though she is not automatically commodified, she also does not wholly escape commodification, as Binhammer suggests. Though the shopkeeper's gaze and assessment of her purchasing power has commodifying implications, her lack of interaction with either the shopkeeper or the goods and her failure to make any purchases which could taint her through commercial interaction, distance her from Kowaleski-Wallace's assessment of almost being commodified. Camilla shows little desire for anything at this point in the novel (apart from reconciliation with Edgar), much less a desire to shop. The commodifying display that does happen within the novel does not occur within the shops but

rather in arenas in which a different kind of “shopping” takes place; it is not within the commercial marketplace or through the shopkeeper’s gaze that this objectification is performed, but through direct and conscious interaction with the marriage market and through the gaze of the male admirer.

The male gaze is a recurrent motif throughout the novel, most profoundly seen through Edgar’s continual watching of Camilla to gauge whether or not she will be a suitable wife. Though Edgar and the shopkeepers similarly utilise the gaze as a means of assessment, Edgar’s, unlike the potentially commodifying gaze of the shopkeeper through its commercial association, is one of moral rather than economic judgment. Under the advice of Dr. Marchmont, Edgar agrees not to propose to Camilla until he is certain of her “possession of those virtues with which she appears to be endowed” as well as “satisfied of her affection” (159). Edgar’s adherence to the injunction to watch and observe Camilla’s behaviour through the lens of the question, “Should I like such behaviour in my wife?” (160) leads to the continual on-again-off-again status of their relationship. In addition to the unpleasant connotations of the constant watching that follows from this, it puts Camilla in an unfair and impossible situation: it would be improper for Camilla to make her feelings known to Edgar before he declares his own, as Mr. Tyrold makes clear after it becomes apparent that Camilla cares for him, yet Edgar will not declare himself until he is sure of her affection (Johnson 158). In his lengthy letter of advice, which is later simplified in Mrs. Tyrold’s injunction to ““Repress, repress”” (881), Camilla’s father cautions her to “beyond all other care, shut up every avenue by which a secret which should die untold can further escape you” (360). The inability of either party to articulate or demonstrate their preference for each other leads to perpetual misunderstandings between the pair.

The narration after Edgar accepts Marchmont’s advice is full of descriptions of his watching: “His eyes were perpetually following Camilla [...]” (198); “[...] while his eye followed her [...]” (198); “This was not unobserved by Edgar [...]” (461); “He *saw* that all her voluntary attention was to Sir Sedley [...]” (481 emphasis added); “But he witnessed at once the propriety of his advice, and its failure” (430); “[...] let me follow her [...] I will watch by her unceasingly” (422); ““I watched her unremittingly”” (595). Edgar’s watching does not go unobserved. Mrs. Arblery watches him watching Camilla and does not approve: ““He has stationed himself there merely to watch and discountenance her”” (460). Mrs.

Arlbery's watching of Edgar is similarly situated to Edgar's watching of Camilla in that its intention is to morally judge him and his objectification of Camilla. Mrs. Arlbery cautions Camilla against attaching herself to Edgar because of his watchfulness, which signifies an inability to ever be fully satisfied:

‘I cannot bear to see your days, your views, your feelings, thus fruitlessly consumed: I have observed this young man narrowly, and I am convinced he is not worth your consideration. [...] You do not see, he does not, perhaps, himself know, how exactly he is calculated to make you wretched. He is a watcher; and a watcher, restless and perturbed himself, infests all he pursues with uneasiness. He is without trust, and therefore without either courage or consistency. To-day he may be persuaded you will make all his happiness; to-morrow, he may fear you will give him nothing but misery. Yet it is not that he is jealous of any other; 'tis of the object of his choice he is jealous, lest she should not prove good enough to merit it.’ (482)

Though Mrs. Arlbery is perhaps harsher on Edgar than he deserves, her point is valid: Edgar shifts back and forth throughout the novel between believing Camilla will be the perfect wife and believing he has nearly made the worst mistake of his life. His watching comes from an anxiety that he might make the wrong choice.

Sir Hugh's servant, Jacob, reports a conversation he has with Mrs. Arlbery where she says:

“‘Camilla is a charming creature [...]; though she may want a little watching too; but so does every thing that is worth having’” (205). Mrs. Arlbery's observation that Camilla *needs* watching is seemingly at odds with her disgust over Edgar doing the very thing she recommends, but Mrs. Arlbery's judgment of Camilla lacks self-interest; she has nothing to gain in advocating the watching of Camilla. Edgar's watching, however, is entirely self-serving; though he acts as Camilla's “monitor” off and on throughout the novel, he directs her behaviour with the view of molding it into that which will be acceptable to him as his wife. Despite her lack of self-interest in advocating the watching of Camilla, Mrs. Arlbery's use of the word “thing” to describe Camilla connects with Kowaleski-Wallace's argument about Camilla's commodification.²⁹ Indeed, Edgar's constant watching and assessing of Camilla's suitability for making a pleasing wife is similar to the women Defoe and Berry discuss as being impolite shoppers who browse without buying; like Mrs. Mittin, “routing over every body's best goods, yet not laying out a penny” (611), and wanting to “*see* all that was smartest, without the expence of buying any thing” (607 emphasis added), Edgar wants the pleasure of looking without the commitment of “buying” Camilla as a wife. Though

²⁹ This also connects with the commodity fetishism discussed by Henderson in “Burney's *The Wanderer* and Early Nineteenth-Century Commodity Fetishism,” which will be analysed in chapter five.

Edgar's gaze is one of moral judgment in attempting to assess whether or not Camilla will be a proper wife for him, as a woman he is attracted to and desires as a wife he also takes pleasure in watching and observing her. One example of this is Camilla's reconciliation with her uncle after the misunderstanding of her disinheritance. Edgar observes her reaction with pleasure: "Edgar, delighted and relieved, thought she was grown a thousand times more beautiful than Indiana; and eagerly taking her hand, ran with her to the apartment of the poor disconsolate Sir Hugh; where his own eyes soon overflowed from tenderness and admiration, at the uncommon scene he witnessed [...]" (32). It is the pleasure Edgar takes from his observation of Camilla that corresponds to her commodification.

Camilla's direct shopping experiences are few, and though they show her naïveté regarding the rules of polite shopping and rob her of most of her spending money, they do not cause the debt that plagues her throughout the latter half of the novel. Rather, it is in allowing her shopping to be done by her proxy, Mrs. Mittin, that Camilla goes into debt. In trusting someone else to shop for her, Camilla rescinds all control while still accepting responsibility for the costs incurred. When Camilla allows Mrs. Mittin to fix her hat, she presumes that Mrs. Mittin will perform the work herself, however, it quickly becomes clear that a milliner has performed the work instead and Camilla must pay though she "had not the smallest idea of incurring a debt which she had no means to discharge" (447). This becomes the pattern when Mrs. Mittin takes charge of buying things for Camilla. Though in some situations Camilla clearly displays a hesitancy in discussing financial matters, as Binhammer suggests, she does ask Mrs. Mittin on a variety of occasions about the cost of the things she purchases. Mrs. Mittin responds with "It all comes to quite a trifle" (447); the narrator similarly relates: "[...] and she promised to procure everything else that was necessary for the merest trifle" (693). Rather than an inability to speak about money, Camilla's problem is a reliance on others spending for her, and specifically Mrs. Mittin's reluctance to disclose costs. Though Mrs. Mittin is well-meaning, she looks out for her own interests before those of Camilla, seeking to further her relationships with local merchants and vendors while doing favours for the gentry, but her goal is not to save Camilla money. Shopping by proxy creates a distance between Camilla and the marketplace; though there is nothing socially or morally wrong with the act of shopping or even performing that action as an individual, the action becomes more complicated when debt enters the

picture. Warned by her father “that where a young woman’s expences exceeded her known expectations, those who were foremost to praise her elegance, would most fear to form any connection with her, and most despise or deride her in any calamity” (377), Camilla knows the dangers of debt. In using a proxy shopper to (consciously or otherwise) distance herself from the shopping experience – perhaps believing that Mrs. Mittin can find better deals than she can personally negotiate – Camilla creates more debt than she would if she engaged directly.

The debt Camilla incurs in order to attend Lord Pervil’s ball is similarly grounded in Mrs. Mittin’s influence and Camilla’s failure to take control of her own spending. The uniform requirement to attend Lord Pervil’s ball, where all the women agree “to be habited in uniform” of “clear fine lawn, with lilac plumes and ornaments” (690), pressures Camilla into spending far more than she can afford. Allowing Mrs. Mittin to undertake her outfitting again arrests any control Camilla has over the cost. Initially dismayed at the sight of all the expensive finery she cannot possibly afford, Camilla convinces herself that Edgar will surely come to the ball and so placates her own feeling of guilt over her expenditures through justifying them as a means to their reconciliation. After the ball, which Edgar does not attend and so the two remain unreconciled, Camilla is disgusted with the implications of her own appearance:

A more minute examination of her attire was not calculated to improve her serenity. Her robe was everywhere edged with the finest Valenciennes lace; her lilac shoes, sash, and gloves, were richly spangled with silver, and finished with a silver fringe; her ear-rings and necklace were of lilac and gold beads; her fan and shoe roses were brilliant with lilac foil, and her bouquet of artificial lilac flowers, and her plumes of lilac feathers, were here and there tipped with the most tiny transparent white beads, to give them the effect of being glittering with dew. (721)

The level of detail given here is conspicuous when considering the lack of detail given to clothing elsewhere in the novel, and can be explained by considering that this is the one true instance of conspicuous consumption performed by Camilla, yet the pleasure of its conspicuousness is for the reader rather than the character. Salih notes that “[s]uch indictments of female sartorial excess were stock features of eighteenth-century conduct literature and it is tempting to conclude that they were included in CI [1796 edition of *Camilla*] to attract the attention of critics on the look-out for the didactic components which made novels acceptable reading matter” (“*Camilla* in Marketplace” 131). However, more than

simply fodder for conduct-manual readings of the novel, this scene also presents Camilla as something to be looked at; Camilla takes no pleasure in her own appearance here, yet the sensory detailing of her clothing indicates an intention to please the lookers, that is, Edgar and the reader. Her other purchases and extravagances are small in comparison to those made by other characters in the novel and though her overall debt is still trifling compared to her male relatives, the intended effect of her dress, the intended display of excess which is meant to draw the attention of various watchers, is significant. As mentioned, these watchers can be distinguished into two groups: those who watch for aesthetic pleasure – the gaze of the shopper at a desired object or of men towards women at a ball, and those who watch in order to morally judge, like Edgar and Mrs. Arlbery who judge Camilla's behaviour. Edgar is the bridge between these two groups as he occupies both categories in his attraction to Camilla and his constant judgment of her behaviour, both of which contribute to his assessment of her as a potential wife.

Salih has pointed out that the 1802 edition of *Camilla* makes significant changes to the more widely read 1796 edition which result in fundamental changes to the novel's initial conduct-manual didacticism. Salih argues that the "moral focus" is altered in the 1802 edition ("*Camilla* and the Marketplace" 128), where the extensive revisions "undermine the strong moral framework of CI. Although Camilla is still misguided in CII [the 1802 edition], it seems that she is not quite so willing to be swayed by lover-mentor and father" (130); this downplaying of male moral influence or guidance is part of what makes Salih suggest that Burney's revision of the novel is a feminist one. Salih continues:

Not only is Camilla's response to male authority toned down in 1802, but her extravagance is also modified in the later edition. Both texts give extensive descriptions of the lack of economic acumen displayed by the heroine during her expeditions to Tunbridge and Southampton, and while she incurs the same debts in CII, the specific details are frequently omitted. (130-31)

Salih notes that the entire section detailing Camilla's outfit for Lord Pervil's "uniformed ball" is cut in the 1802 edition, leading her to surmise that, in the second edition, "the results of Camilla's conspicuous consumption are invoked rather than enumerated, thus reducing the reader's sense of the utter futility of the heroine's debts, as well as her culpability in running them up" (131). In cutting the conspicuous description of "sartorial excess" (Salih 131) Burney removes the reader's gaze from Camilla and limits the resulting commodification of her body. However, Camilla's intention that her extravagant outfit should

act as a means of drawing Edgar's attention and so open a means of reconciliation through inviting his gaze remains, despite CII's missing detail. Though Salih's reading of the novel's revision provides insight into a much neglected avenue of studies on *Camilla*, her suggestion that Burney's editing was motivated from feminist underpinnings is not in keeping with the conservative conclusions found in all of Burney's four novels, including the revised 1802 edition of *Camilla*; though some of the details may have changed, the outcome is still largely the same.

Not all of Camilla's debts are self-serving in the way those incurred for her ball gown are. One of the most troubling debts Camilla sustains is on behalf of her brother Lionel, who borrows £200 from Camilla's half-serious suitor, the foppish Sir Sedley Clarendel. Camilla confronts her brother regarding his repayment of the money, to which he responds:

‘Why, what had I to do with it? Do you think he would care one fig if he saw me sunk to the bottom of the Red Sea? No, my dear, no; you are the little debtor; so balance your accounts for yourself, and don't cast them upon your poor neighbours, who have full enough to settle of their own.’

Camilla was thunderstruck; ‘And have you been so cruel,’ she cried, ‘seeing the matter in such a light, to place me in such a predicament?’

‘Cruel, my dear girl? why, what will it cost you, except a dimple or two the more? And don't you know you always look best when you smile? I assure you, it's a mercy he don't see you when you are giving me one of my lectures. It disfigures you so horribly, that he'd take fright and never speak to you again.’

‘What can I ever say, to make you hear me, or feel for me?’ (523)

This exchange between brother and sister presents a layering of consumption, exchange, and debt. On a symbolic level, Lionel's reference to the Red Sea equates him with Pharaoh's army who, in Exodus 14:26-31, are drowned in pursuit of the fleeing Israelites. The Egyptians profited immensely from the slave labour of the Israelites and Lionel does much the same through Camilla who, through her own sense of duty, guilt, and propriety is similarly (though clearly not physically) enslaved to cater to Lionel's whims, becoming a kind of slave to the debts she incurs through him. On a monetary level, Lionel is indebted to Sir Sedley, however this becomes complicated by the fact that Sir Sedley is Camilla's suitor (though the sincerity of his courtship is always doubtful) and the loan is made with the understanding that Camilla will become Sir Sedley's wife, thus the loan will be legitimated through future familial ties, as one made to a brother. Camilla thus becomes not only the means through which the exchange of money happens and the debt incurred, but becomes part of the exchange as well. Camilla is not in love with Sir Sedley, and

though she admits to her sisters that “once, to her never-ending regret, she had apparently welcomed his civilities [...]” (522) she is flabbergasted to find herself practically engaged to a man because her brother, in his perpetual frivolity, needed £200. Lionel not only transfers his own debt to his sister to carry, but in so doing offers her as a sexually consumable item through effectively cementing her engagement. His suggestion that she can pay the debt or appease Sir Sedley with smiles and dimples, thereby suggesting that she can pay a monetary debt through giving physical, visual pleasure, debases her further and adds to her commodification through the marriage market.

The excess of frivolity present in Lionel’s character is emblematic of what several of the novel’s other characters see as wrong with the present generation of men. In lamenting that Edgar will seemingly marry Indiana, leaving Camilla without a hope of marrying a man as worthy as Edgar, Mrs. Tyrold says: “‘What a prospect for her, then, with our present race of young men! their frivolous fickleness nauseates whatever they can reach; they have a weak shame of asserting, or even listening to what is right, and a shallow pride in professing what is wrong’” (222). Though not explicitly referring to her son Lionel, the description fits him perfectly and reveals a subconscious judgment of him, particularly as this scene takes place just after learning of his manipulation of Uncle Relvil. Her own unintended acknowledgment of her son’s deficiencies comes shortly thereafter: “[...] while his wife, animated off her guard, warmly exclaimed – ‘My dear, excellent Edgar! you are indeed the model, the true son of your guardian!’” (231). Though not said within Lionel’s hearing, it is a harsh indictment of his character. Mr. Dubster remarks of Lionel: “‘It’s surprising how them young gentlemen never think of nothing’” (283). The narrator later interjects: “No animal is more gregarious than a fashionable young man, who, whatever may be his abilities to think, rarely decides, and still less frequently acts for himself. He may wish, he may appreciate, internally with justice and wisdom; but he only says, and only does, what some other man of fashion, higher in vogue, or older in courage, has said or has done before him” (706). The narrator and Mrs. Tyrold lament the inability of young men to stand upon their own convictions rather than be led by fashion in spite of the fact that they know better. Lionel’s deference to fashion is ultimately a main part of the reason behind his debt and the chaos resulting from it. Despite Mrs. Tyrold’s lamentation which implies that this is solely a flaw in young men, young women are similarly subject to the same failing as seen in the debt

Camilla accrues in attending the uniform ball; rather than spending a good deal of money on a dress which will set her apart from the crowd, Camilla goes into debt in order to look like everyone else, thus falling directly into the crime of being led by fashion.

The debts Lionel incurs while at university come from being too easily led by the “merry blades” he associates with (227). Acknowledging that these “merry blades” “are but sad fellows,” Lionel admits “there is such fun, such spirit, such sport amongst them, I cannot for my life keep out of their way. Besides, you have no conception, young ladies, what a bye word you become among them if they catch you flinching” (227). For fear of being heckled for not taking part in the fun, for not keeping up appearances, Lionel goes into debt. His expenditures are excessive as shown by the fact that he never has any money and seems to perpetually beg money from his sisters and especially Sir Hugh. What it is he perpetually spends money on is never detailed in the same way that Camilla’s expenditures are and so the reader cannot take as much vicarious aesthetic pleasure from his expenses as he or she can through the deliberate enumeration and detail given to Camilla’s, yet despite this lack of detail there is the implication of excess. Though Mr. and Mrs. Tyrold are clearly unhappy with Lionel’s actions, particularly extorting money from sickly Uncle Relvil, the novel does not focus on their displeasure with the same detail as that applied to Camilla; though he admits to feeling ashamed and regretting the results of his actions, his shame is never long lived. The censure given by the narrator or the parents is limited to Mrs. Tyrold’s astonishment and indignation: “Shocked and grieved in the extreme, she ordered him from her sight, and wrote to Dr. Marchmont to receive him” (229). The lengths to which Mrs. Tyrold goes in attempting to undo the damage caused by Lionel are disproportionate to the censure he receives. Relvil’s health suffers so much from the extortion escapade that he relocates to Portugal where he discovers that Lionel is the culprit; Mrs. Tyrold journeys to Portugal to nurse him and attempt to reconcile her brother to her first-born, which then means that she, the stricter and more exacting parent in point of conduct, is absent for the majority of the novel. As a direct result of Lionel’s greed and excess the rest of the family suffer because of Mrs. Tyrold’s absence. Upon learning that his mother is forced to journey to Portugal because of his actions, he rashly and melodramatically threatens to kill himself:

He then suffered his sisters to lead him back to their room, where he cast himself upon a chair, in painful rumination upon his own unworthiness, and his parents' excellence; but the tender soothings of Lavinia and Camilla, who trembled lest his remorse should urge him to some act of violence, soon drew him from reflections of which he hated the intrusion; and he attended, with complacency, to their youthful security of perfect reconciliations, and re-established happiness. [...] For some minutes all were profoundly still, Lionel then suddenly started up; the sisters, affrighted, hastily arose at the same instant; when stretching himself and yawning, he called out, 'Pr'ythee, Camilla, what is become of that smug Mr. Dubster?' (228)

Whether or not Lionel's initial remorse at learning the effects of his actions is sincere, his quick reconciliation with his own questionable morals indicates a clear lack of depth and moral awareness.

Lionel's continual use of Sir Hugh as a source of free money finally spurs Mr. Tyrold to action in disciplining him, though it is too little too late; the hush money his father will not allow Sir Hugh to pay leads Lionel to flee to the Continent. Though Lionel essentially runs away from his debts and the actions leading to those debts, his escape becomes exile, a punishment long overdue. It is not Lionel's excess of gaiety or frivolity or his manipulation of his sisters that draws down the ire of his father, but the advantage he takes of his uncle's generosity. The substantial amounts of money Lionel begs and bullies out of Sir Hugh can be seen as a kind of excessive consumption of Sir Hugh's assets, seemingly necessary to offset Lionel's personal excesses. Rather than lamenting the inappropriate liaison he has formed with a married woman, and the impropriety of the metaphorical sexual consumption he has engaged in, Mr. Tyrold most resents Lionel's manipulation of Sir Hugh's charitability: "Accident, by throwing into my hands this last letter to the uncle whose goodness you have most unwarrantably and unfeelingly abused, has given birth to an investigation, by which I have arrived at the discovery of the long course of rapacity by which you have pillaged from the same source. Henceforth, you will find it dry" (733-34). Mr. Tyrold effectively disowns his son with this letter, unless "suffering should lead to contrition, and seclusion from the world bring thee back to rectitude, then thou may'st find again thy father" (734). The novel ends with Lionel still on the Continent, with the rest of the family hoping he will in time forget his unfortunate connections and become more stable, though the likelihood is that this transformation will be slow, if it comes at all.

The same cannot be said of one of the novel's other excessive male consumers, Clermont Lynmere, cousin of the Tyrold children who is, at the novel's end, placed into the army and left there, his absence hardly noted by his family. Though absent from the first half of the novel, Clermont's presence

looms over the Tyrold family as the intended spouse for Eugenia; it is in the hopes of making her an adequate mate for such a scholar as Sir Hugh intends him to be that Eugenia's classical education is so vigorous, but this intention, as is the case with all of Sir Hugh's schemes, fails to play out as anticipated. The intended pairing of these two is of particular interest when considering the way in which both characters deviate from gender norms. "Not accidentally, Eugenia's giddy male relatives lack the discipline for classical education. Since its immasculating rigors are not functional for sentimental manhood, they form female manhood instead. [...] [C]lassical education becomes the basis of Eugenia's virtue and at the same time really does deform her" (Johnson 152). Because she has "read no novels" (315), Eugenia has no frame of reference with which to understand the dangers of fortune hunters; the implied instruction to be gained through novel reading is clearly Burney's attempt to underline the moral and didactic potential of novels. Clermont is the converse of this, requesting only Sir Hugh's newspapers (567) as he is averse to any kind of substantial reading; his worldliness stands in stark contrast to Eugenia's extreme naïveté. Salih describes Clermont:

Clermont is marked in the novel as highly, unacceptably effeminate. His perfect feminine body is indeed represented as the obverse of Eugenia's and the mirror image of his sister, Indiana's, his beauty and his effeminate person suggesting the contiguity of masculine and feminine identities, along with their free-floating nature in relation to sex (so that it is possible to be a manly woman or a womanly man). ("*Camilla* and *The Wanderer*" 42)

This reading is made clearer through focusing on the novel's conspicuously explicit description of Clermont:

Clermont Lynmere so entirely resembled his sister in person, that now, in his first youth, he might almost have been taken for her, even without change of dress: but the effect produced upon the beholders bore not the same parallel: what in her was beauty in its highest delicacy, in him seemed effeminacy in its lowest degradation. The brilliant fairness of his forehead, the transparent pink of his cheeks, the pouting vermillion of his lips, the liquid luster of his languishing blue eyes, the minute form of his almost infantine mouth, and the snowy whiteness of his small hands and taper fingers, far from bearing the attraction which, in his sister, rendered them so lovely, made him considered by his own sex as an unmanly fop, and by the women, as too conceited to admire any thing but himself. (569)

This rather damning picture of Clermont illustrates the "free-floating nature" of gender seen by Salih, in particular the equation drawn between brother and sister – Clermont could stand in for Indiana even without changing clothes. The lack of attraction other people feel towards him is significant; his awareness of his own beauty is repugnant to women and his unmanliness makes him detestable to men – he is thus

only attractive to himself, an asexual being of sorts, one who does not consume sexually and who is not sexually consumed. This effeminacy coupled with his boorishly negligent manners and affected preference for all things Continental typifies him as a fop, but this classification becomes complicated when contrasting him to the novel's other key foppish character, Sir Sedley Clarendel.

Sir Sedley's affected apathy and disregard for polite behaviour is effective because of the lack of emotion attached to it and the fact that his is a self-aware affectation; he betrays "under a deep and wilful veil of conceit and affectation, a secret disposition to deride the very follies he was practising" (64).

Dressed in the "extreme of fashion" (64) when she first meets him, Camilla's second encounter with Sir Sedley is different:

Here the ill dressed man [...] strolled up to her, and fastening his eyes upon her face, though without bowing, made some speech about the weather, with the lounging freedom of manner of a confirmed old acquaintance. His whole appearance had an air of even wilful slovenliness: His hair was uncombed; he was in boots, which were covered with mud; his coat seemed to have been designedly immersed in powder, and his universal negligence was not only shabby but uncleanly. Astonished and offended by his forwardness, Camilla turned entirely away from him. (86)

Undaunted by Camilla's rebuff, Sir Sedley sits down just behind her. Clermont, on the other hand, cannot control his disgust, anger, and outrage effectively, thus belying the foppish intention that he does not care. Similarly accoutered, Clermont enters a ball in riding dress (666), though unlike Sir Sedley's more studied approach, Clermont clearly intends to cause a scene and unsettle people; despite Sir Sedley's lack of manners, he possesses an awareness of how he *should* behave, but consciously chooses not to, while Clermont's awareness as to rules of social interaction are in greater doubt.

Clermont's excesses are made explicit several times throughout the novel. Shortly after his return from the Continent the family have just gathered around the breakfast table when, "young Lynmere instantly and almost voraciously began eating of everything that was upon the table" (565). After some very awkward interaction and general silence, Dr. Orkborne attempts to start a conversation at Sir Hugh's urging through reciting a verse from Horace, but "was stopt short, by the eager manner in which Lynmere re-seized his bread with one hand, while, with the other, to the great discomposure of the exact Miss Margland, he stretched forth for the tea-pot, to pour out a bason of tea; not ceasing the libation till the saucer itself, overcharged, sent his beverage in trickling rills from the tablecloth to the floor" (566-67). If

the voraciousness of Clermont's consumption is an indicator of character, his is clearly a bad one; his appetite for excess, and the staged display of excess, is conspicuous. As Philip Carter points out, affectation or "false feeling" in men was often associated with the foreign influence of "French and Italian centres of ostentatious, and hence false, refinement" (127); though Clermont clearly subscribes to this kind of false affectation, he spends the majority of his time in Leipzig, Germany which, while still foreign and Continental, is not a destination generally associated with foppish influence. Cohen points out that the issue of display for men was just as transgressive as for women: "Women's display was a transgression of modesty and propriety; men's display was a transgression which spoke of effeminacy and of the corruption brought about by consorting with the foreign" (63). Clermont consistently displays an intentional neglect of social rules and standards of behaviour, while simultaneously displaying what he hopes appear to be refined tastes.

A similar scene of Clermont's affected excessive consumption takes place when he requests something to eat from a servant, to which Sir Hugh responds:

'Eat, nephew! why you would not eat before supper, when here's nobody done tea? not that I'd have you baulk your appetite, which, to be sure, ought to be the best judge.'
The youth ordered some oysters.
There were none in the house.
He desired a barrel might immediately be procured; he could eat nothing else. (585)

The physical structure of this passage, specifically the way in which the lines are set apart and the short sentence length, emphasises both the ridiculous and excessive nature of Clermont's request and allows for his theatrical response to the lack of oysters.

Clermont's debts ultimately come to nearly bankrupt Sir Hugh, who cannot cover them and assist his brother without making drastic alterations to his style of living. Sir Hugh struggles with cutting his expenditures, not wanting to hurt or offend anyone, knowing that the poor depend on his charity: "[...] when he mentioned diminishing his table, he was afraid the poor would take it ill, as they were used to have his orts [...]" (787). In so abruptly leaving Cleves and disrupting his own comfort, his civic duty to those dependent on him is presumably also disrupted despite his desire that his own financial troubles should not impinge upon them; in this way the debts of Clermont, Lionel, and Camilla directly and indirectly lead to Sir Hugh's momentary lapse in civic duty and the suffering of his dependents.

The excessiveness of Clermont's consumption, whether an (unsuccessful) attempt to distinguish himself as a person of taste, a display of disregard for the rules of polite society, or simply a reflection of the lack of attention paid to social decorum in his education, coupled with his conspicuous effeminacy, parallels him with women's excessive consumption. He shares an affinity to earlier characters such as Mrs. Baynard in particular in that they are both marked by their avaricious and acquisitive natures, keen to display their purported taste and refinement through their power to consume, and both cause the near-destruction of estates and their attendant civic humanist obligations. Though Clermont's consumption is of different things and without the same kind of domestic emphasis, it still has domestic implications and centres around issues of display and excess.

Edgar's material consumption, in contrast to that of Lionel or Clermont, is unremarked upon, and, as Binhammer argues, "[u]nlike the desiring men of the novel, Edgar has no economic ambitions, thus establishing him early on as the moral arbiter of Camilla's actions" (12). Yet although Edgar has no economic ambition, already being a wealthy landowner, he desires a different kind of object: a deserving wife. Though Edgar is a chaste and virtuous hero as far as the reader knows, his self-interested behaviour leading up to his intended sexual consumption of Camilla through marriage is the major (inferred) point on which the love plot hinges. Though Edgar's sexual consumption of Camilla does not happen until they are married at the novel's conclusion, his perpetual watching is not only disturbing but signifies his intended consumption; the moral judgment Edgar engages in is facilitated through his watchfulness. Not dissimilar to the way in which Blifil bides his time until he can "consume" Sophia, Edgar waits and watches for the time to be right when he can consume Camilla. Edgar's intentions are not, of course, nearly as sinister or spiteful as those of Blifil, but the fact that he sits in judgment for so long, waiting for Camilla to prove herself worthy of his love and worthy to be his wife, makes the goodness of his character questionable. His obsession with Camilla's virtue is a kind of excess; his need to clarify the purity of what he will "consume" is reminiscent of Matthew Bramble's worries in *Humphry Clinker*: neither man wants to consume an impure product that has been tainted by the influence or manipulations of others.

The commodifying gaze of the male observer, seen here through Edgar's simultaneous moral judgment and desire to figuratively consume Camilla, is paralleled in the commodification of the author

through selling the novel as commercial object. The public selling of the novel invites the public gaze upon the figure of the author which, as seen at the beginning of this chapter, becomes intertwined with and complicated by the gender of the author. Just as Camilla invites Edgar's gaze through her extravagant outfit for the uniform ball, thus unconsciously intending to turn herself into an objectified source of aesthetic pleasure for male observers, the author invites the gaze of the public onto his or her created commodity. This intended element of display is further seen in the ways in which the characters go into debt; both male and female characters purchase goods in order to present themselves a certain way: Camilla seeks to attract Edgar's notice, Lionel wants to keep up with his friends at Oxford and not be ridiculed for failing to participate in their expensive "fun" due to lack of funds, and Clermont tries to present himself as a man of the world with refined tastes. Their acts of display – inviting the gaze of others while attempting to direct public opinion – serves only to objectify and pigeonhole them as excessive, foppish, or morally light.

Burney's focus on the domestic implications of consumption in *Camilla* requires an equally close look at the public sphere; a look at the politicised interpretation of the excesses of consumption in Maria Edgeworth's *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *The Absentee* provides just such an opportunity. The absence of political commentary or even historical context is conspicuous in *Camilla* especially when considering the extraordinary political upheaval taking place on the Continent and in the American colonies in the years preceding the novel's publication. In taking Ireland as her subject matter, however, Edgeworth is forced to confront politics through the political implications of her protagonists' consumption, and expand the parameters of the consumption debate in a way that Burney does not.

Chapter Four: Maria Edgeworth and the Politics of Consumption

In looking at the ways in which novels of the long eighteenth century shape British society's shifting views on consumption and the ways in which gender informs these views, Edgeworth is singularly placed. As a contemporary and indeed an inheritor of Burney, Edgeworth creates a far more overtly didactic adaptation of the "conduct novel,"³⁰ applying it to the economic, political, and national situation in Ireland. This chapter marks a shift within this project through Edgeworth's clear utilisation of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Writing in a post-Smithian society, Edgeworth's interpretation and representation of consumption and political economy is, as we shall see, different from her predecessors.

Consumption, particularly excessive and fiscally irresponsible consumption, is a theme presented in Edgeworth's Irish novels. The point of the novels, however, is not to critique consumption as a morally dangerous action, as seen in other novels discussed within this project; rather, consumption is a distraction or hurdle Edgeworth's landowners must bypass or overcome in order to achieve the greater goal of economic development and social responsibility. Unlike the targeted gender-based attacks on conspicuous consumption seen in *Humphry Clinker*, Edgeworth faults both genders for indulging beyond individual means. Edgeworth follows the theories of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* in forwarding the intention in her Irish novels to advance the economic development of Ireland, thus in turn aiding the social progression of Irish society. In following Smith, Edgeworth's utilisation of consumption through her landowning protagonists comes from an economic standpoint rather than a cultural or political one; her use of consumption as a means of political commentary, however, is more subtly if equivocally offered through the seemingly peripheral Irish characters.

Marilyn Butler points out, "[b]y far the most suggestive text for a political reading of the Irish tales is Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), the first major book R.L. Edgeworth gave her to read when he took her from her English boarding-school in 1782" (Introduction 28). Smith's labour theory of value is, according to Butler, the part of his treatise most prominently used by Edgeworth; "his [Smith's]

³⁰ The contentious term for Burney's novels coined by Joyce Hemlow in "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books."

severe, satirical eye for non-productive people and practices in all walks of society, from the highest downwards, and an evolutionary model of history” are elements of his work that recur most frequently in Edgeworth’s Irish tales (Introduction 28). Butler argues that, drawing on the French physiocrats, Smith “puts land foremost as a source of national wealth. He also adopts the French division of agricultural producers into two groups – proprietors (landlords who draw rents and do not farm) and cultivators of land (farmer-owners, tenant-farmers and agricultural labourers)” (Introduction 30). According to Butler, Edgeworth “singles out unproductive proprietors (not merely absentees) as the main targets of her satire” (Introduction 31), which is reflective of her focus on Smith’s productive and unproductive theory of labour. These “proprietors,” or landlords who treat their estates purely as a source of rent, are unproductive in Smithian terms regardless of whether they live on the estate or not; absenteeism does not necessarily have an impact on the economic productivity of an estate. Rather, the problem with absentees is one of social leadership rather than economics; as Edgeworth shows through Burke’s management of the Clonbrony estate in *The Absentee*, an estate can be productive and flourishing regardless of whether the proprietor is there. Though the tenants believe their circumstances would improve if the Clonbrons returned, the Garraghty brothers’ mismanagement and exploitation would persist were it not for direct intervention by Lord Clonbrony; because it is only through Colambre’s investigation into the practices of the brothers that their mismanagement is discovered, the presence alone of Lord Clonbrony does not promise any relief to the tenants’ exploitation. Social leadership of the landlord, however, can only be provided through physical presence on the estate.

Sir Walter Scott speaks to this kind of social leadership in connection to labour, specifically to manufacturing proprietors’ responsibility for his workers. In a letter to Sir William Knighton, Scott laments the decay of social responsibility that came along with steam-powered manufacturing:

[...] the proprietor acted as seigneur, knew the characters of those dwelling around him and for his own sake kept up a degree of discipline and subordination – this the worst men were forced to do and good men did much more. In hard times such a man was obliged to maintain his work people till work came round and was usually assisted on such occasions by the country gentlemen. In short the *employer* possessed the natural influence over the *employed* which go [...] so far to strengthen the bonds of society. But where the engines are driven by *steam* there is and can be nothing of all this – [...]. (542)

As Scott describes it, proprietors formerly felt a sense of responsibility for the well-being of their employees; though motivation for this stems from the self-interested necessity of having a workforce ready and willing to labour when work is available, there is clearly a social benefit in the proprietor providing for the well-being, and vouching for the character, of his employees while coordinating with local gentry. In contrast, employees in manufacturing towns “are employed perhaps for a fortnight and then turned off, the employer knowing no more or caring no more than if they were so many old pirns or shuttles. Instead therefore of being governed by their masters they form benefit societies amongst themselves and seldom fail to add drink and politics to the more proper purpose of their meeting [...]” (542). Though steam-powered manufactures make for increased production, greater division of labour, and specialisation – all good things in terms of creating profits and greater wealth, there is also clearly an inherent social cost, which, Scott suggests, leads to radicalism and other social ills. So, though more productive modes of labour are economically beneficial, the social leadership of the proprietor or the absentee landlord is equally important for the local community.

In *Ennui*, Edgeworth presents McLeod as the mouthpiece of Smith, signaled superficially by their shared Scottish nationality, and more substantially by McLeod’s espousal of Smith’s theory of labour. Kathleen Costello-Sullivan suggests otherwise, finding McLeod’s attempts to educate local Irish children as a representation of a colonising force: “The paternalistic acceptance of the responsibility to ‘improve’ the native is, of course, a standard colonialist trope, most fully realized in *Ennui* through the character McLeod” (148). Though I do not refute that McLeod’s character could be read in this way, the overt Smithianism of McLeod’s principles should not be overlooked in favour of colonial subtleties, especially when considering that Smith himself was not a proponent of mercantile colonial practices.

After Glenthorn, without inquiry, gives away “indiscriminate donations to objects apparently the most miserable,” McLeod voices his opinion: “*I doubt* whether the best way of encouraging the industrious is to give premiums to the idle” (189), with the critique of indiscriminate monetary charity resting in the problem of “reliev[ing] present misery, without creating more in future” (189). As Camille R. La Bossière points out, McLeod’s “every thought begins with ‘*I doubt*’ or ‘*It might be doubted*,’” which ultimately serves as part of Glenthorn’s education: “His [McLeod’s] philosophy for an education

founded on tempering doubt holds out the promise of an industrious and intellectually cultivated, peaceful and materially prosperous Ireland [...]” (418). Shortly after his indiscriminate charitable giving, Glenthorn is inundated, as he relates in retrospect:

[...] by crowds of eloquent beggars, who soon surrounded me: many who had been resolutely struggling with their difficulties, slackened their exertions, and left their labour for the easier trade of imposing upon my credulity. The money I had bestowed was wasted at the dram-shop, or it became the subject of family-quarrels; and those whom I had *relieved* returned to *my honour*, with fresh and insatiable expectations. All this time my industrious tenants grumbled, because no encouragement was given to them; and, looking upon me as a weak, good-natured fool, they combined in a resolution to ask me for long leases, or reduction of rent. (190)

Through examples from Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, McLeod combats all of Glenthorn’s well-intentioned but misguided attempts to aid his tenantry. When Glenthorn considers raising wages, McLeod responds: “*It might be doubted* whether the people would not work less, when they could with less work have money enough to support them” (190-91). Similarly, “I [Glenthorn] gave marriage-portions to the daughters of my tenants, and rewards to those who had children; for I had always heard that legislators should encourage population”; McLeod responds: “that my estate was so populous, that the complaint in each family was, that they had not land for the sons. *It might be doubted* whether, if a farm could support but ten people, it were wise to encourage the birth of twenty. *It might be doubted* whether it were not better for ten to live, and be well fed, than for twenty to be born, and to be half-starved” (191). A subtle contrast is created here between the advice Glenthorn attributes to legislators and Smith’s theory, where the encouragement of population growth encouraged by the former is refuted by the latter; Smith’s economic advice, in the context of the Glenthorn estate, trumps advice of political rulers, which is symptomatic of Edgeworth’s distancing of Glenthorn from the political. In addition to opinions on wages and reproduction, McLeod’s stance on lease terms, encouraging competition in selling material goods, and dividing labour so as to make manufacturing cheaper and more efficient are all in keeping with Smith’s system. Glenthorn wants to make his tenants happy and prosperous but, in desiring a quick fix, does not understand why his un-Smithian efforts perpetually backfire or are “doubted” by McLeod. Glenthorn fails to see the long-term consequences of his more short-term solutions to the problems of his tenantry; though he wants to improve the lives of his tenants and bring them out of their supposed Irish backwardness, he

does not want, or is seemingly unable, to make the effort to do it along more economically sustainable lines.

Absent from Smith's treatise is any treatment of the political. History, for Smith, is driven by economics rather than politics or other cultural forces, as seen in the historical progression of societies based on economic development that is presented throughout his work. Though there are, as Fraser Easton and others point out, political implications to Smith's work, Smith intentionally left politics out of his analysis as a context irrelevant to his discussion of the creation of wealth. In the context of early eighteenth-century Ireland, however, the extent to which Smith can be effectively utilised because of his avoidance of the political is called into question when considering the unique political situation within that country.

Though Smith discusses the potential union of Ireland with Great Britain at the same time as he considers other colonial economic situations, he focuses on union as a boon for the Irish economy and opportunity for greater social advancement:

By a union with Great Britain, Ireland would gain, besides the freedom of trade, other advantages much more important, and which would much more than compensate any increase of taxes that might accompany that union. By the union with England the middling and inferior ranks of people in Scotland gained a complete deliverance from the power of an aristocracy which had always before oppressed them. By a union with Great Britain the greater part of the people of all ranks in Ireland would gain an equally complete deliverance from a much more oppressive aristocracy; an aristocracy not founded, like that of Scotland, in the natural and respectable distinctions of birth and fortune, but in the most odious of all distinctions, those of religious and political prejudices; distinctions which, more than any other, animate both the insolence of the oppressors and the hatred and indignation of the oppressed, and which commonly render the inhabitants of the same country more hostile to one another than those of different countries are. Without a union with Great Britain the inhabitants of Ireland are not likely for many ages to consider themselves as one people. (Smith Book V 548)

According to Smith then, Ireland would prosper economically through Union, the outcome of which would necessarily result in further social progression as Ireland evolves into a commercial society.

Though Smith often uses Scotland's union with England and Wales as the exemplar for Ireland, both in terms of union and in historical development, the comparison is limited as the situations in the two countries are distinctly different. While Scotland's economic struggles in the wake of the Darien Scheme led to the dissolving of its parliament and the creation of Great Britain, Ireland's union with England, Scotland, and Wales came about as a result of failed political rebellion; to say that politics should not or

cannot play a role in Ireland's development is to ignore contemporary history and the divisive political situation presented. As an advocate and adherent of Smith's theories, the question then becomes how Edgeworth copes with the absence of politics in her application of Smith to Ireland; the relevance of applying Smith to the case of Ireland because the political is necessary to its advancement is an additional question worth asking.

Easton addresses some of the political questions relating to Smith in "Cosmopolitical Economy: Exchangeable Value and National Development in Adam Smith and Maria Edgeworth." Easton discusses the political implications of Smith's description of "transnational prosperity" (100 note 2) through suggesting "that the Smithian paradigm of value, which Edgeworth follows so religiously in her work, is fundamentally an imperial paradigm, one that legitimates a presumptive hierarchy of nations headed by Britain" (103). Easton looks at "how Smith's thought shapes the cosmopolitical – and not just psychological or social – vision of Edgeworth's novel" (103). Following Smith's ideas that development comes through exchange, which is the hallmark of modern society, Easton suggests that imperial governance is inherent in the notion of exchange; though Edgeworth agreed with Smith "that trade could be an instrument of equality between nations regardless of differences in material development" (102), there is a tension present in her work "between a needed reform of Irish economic life and the possible loss of Irish national characteristics" (102). Easton suggests that this tension is not original, however, as "the equation of economic development and cultural homogeneity derives directly from *The Wealth of Nations* and Smith's codification of political economy" (102); this "paradox" is present in Edgeworth's work through her "appropriation of Smith" (102).

Easton explains the "cosmopolitical dimensions" of Smith's doctrine through the paradox "that the hardest working societies are not necessarily the wealthiest ones" (103); rather, less labour can produce more wealth which is explained in part through the division of labour that creates greater wealth through productive, as opposed to unproductive, labour. Personal wealth is "our purchasing power over either labor directly or the produce of labor" (104), but the value of labour is not found in the act of labour itself, but rather in "the social interaction of exchange" (105) in that the produce of labour is valuable only through exchange, through someone else desiring that produce and being willing to exchange for it. More

than just the driving force behind markets, exchange is “the motor force behind the division of labor, and thus, by implication, behind the rise of opulence in society” (105). According to Smith, stages of society are differentiated through degrees of specialisation and the division of labour, but as Easton points out, comparisons of different societies are drawn from “contemporary cross-cultural observation” (106), which is inherently tinged by “colonial and imperial conquest” (107). In addition to these overt prejudices, Easton sees a “covert prejudice” in Smith’s implication that in commercial societies “our humanity is best realized *not* in labor (essentially a mechanical power) or in consumption (essentially an animal capacity), but in exchange” (107). Easton sees Smith as attributing servility to “pastoral and feudal interdependence” because of the lack of mutual exchange; this lack of exchange is what dehumanises “the inhabitants of savage society” (109). Though the propensity to exchange may be inherent in everyone, “opportunities for the *cultivation* of exchange are a properly historical development” (110), thus opening the way for the justification of “an imperial mandate in which contemporary British society is the measure of, and relations of trade the means to, the ‘improvement’ of other nations” (114).

In his analysis of her Irish novels, Easton sees Edgeworth showing the benefits of cosmopolitan commerce on one hand, and the loss of Irish culture as the result of this commerce on the other. According to Easton, Edgeworth utilises a “Smithianized, Burkeanism” (121) to reconcile the tension between “promoting Irish economic development” and justifying “Irish manners and customs to her London audience” (115). For Smith, national manners develop out of a society’s respective historical stage (119); though Edgeworth incorporates the role of national contexts into “Smith’s notion of the socially determining role of the mode of production” (119), she, according to Easton, suggests that these determinations “*must* play out differently, since although Edgeworth accepts, with Smith, that the propensity to exchange is a fact of human nature, its development (she posits) is not” (119). Rather, the development of exchange is cultivated through education (118) and through proper management (119). Easton argues that Edgeworth “moralizes management,” through which “Edgeworth adapts the political valence of Smith’s work – including its critique of idle and despotic landlords – to open up the possibility of an *intended* amelioration, via a local enlightened landowner class, of colonial and religious abuses” (119). However, the valourisation of management that Easton sees is grounded with the estate agents

themselves – in Jason Quirk, McLeod, and Burke – rather than in the landowners through whom this “intended amelioration” is supposed to happen. Though the latter two agents serve as educators to their employers, it is realistic to assume that these men will remain at their posts and keep the estates on the path of economic and social development; in “moralizing management,” Edgeworth is moralising and valourising the middle class agents rather than the landowners whose roles become largely symbolic if their agents are the ones performing the real labour. In their roles as social leaders, however, their importance is pivotal, rather than merely symbolic. Easton sees Edgeworth adapting Smith, concluding that:

[...] for all the Burkean elements in Edgeworth, the economic implications of Smithian doctrine run deeper. [...] In any event, exchangeable value, and the whole system of social explanation erected upon it, allows Edgeworth to stigmatize *both* backward-looking nationalists *and* expropriative landlords as co-dependent enemies of Irish development. The way forward for Ireland is to abandon reveries of either conquest or re-conquest in favor of a real, material happiness. (124-25)

Though Easton’s conclusion that Edgeworth recommends Ireland “abandon reveries” of its political history is perhaps in keeping with Smith’s intentional omission of politics, it seems far too simplistic and unrealistic a conclusion to draw, given the obvious complications inherent in Edgeworth’s application of Smith and in Smith’s own treatment of Ireland within *The Wealth of Nations*. As Spencer Jackson shows, Ireland’s past perpetually haunts its present and future, despite the cosmopolitan symbolism of Edgeworth’s protagonists: “[...] the conclusion of *The Absentee* portrays the imperial dream of a perpetual state of cosmopolitan peace as a sentimental veil for the insurmountable history of antagonism that interrupts every effort to declare the end of history and thereby preserves the possibility of the future” (527). To suggest that Edgeworth trumps the material economic prosperity of Ireland downplays the subtlety of the ambivalent endings of *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *The Absentee*. While Easton acknowledges Edgeworth’s agenda of critiquing absenteeism and the economic advantages resulting from landlords who reside on their estates, he does not discuss the political implications of Anglo-Irish landlords in the context of the imperial paradigm he sees as implicit to Smith’s treatise. In his discussion of Edgeworth’s “Smithianized, Burkeanism” Easton argues that “Edgeworth portrays the successful diffusion of the Smithian agenda in Ireland as occurring through a Burkean mechanism of

affective example, albeit one tied no longer to aristocratic birth or to national tradition but to economic improvement” (121). While the examples set by Edgeworth in the Smithian estate agents of McLeod in *Ennui* and Burke in *The Absentee* are positive, non-aristocratic ones, those of the protagonists in both of these novels are clearly not; though Glenthorn is technically not of aristocratic parentage, his breeding, behaviour, education, and subsequent marriage make this a moot point. Though Colambre may set an example to his tenants of responsible, fiscally sound leadership, the message is intended for Colambre’s would-be peers or at least social equals, that is, English gentry or other Anglo-Irish absentee landlords who should be spurred on to more direct engagement with their estates. As Easton points out, Edgeworth sought “to justify Irish manners and customs to her London audience” (115) and while *part* of her intention is undoubtedly to prove that the Irish were not the uncivilised barbarians the English perceived them to be,³¹ it is also true that another aim of these novels was to address the Anglo-Irish elite and exhort them to greater action; birth and rank play a pivotal role in this intention as well as in her portrayal of Irish life, particularly in the examples set by Colambre and Glenthorn. Easton acknowledges that “*The Wealth of Nations* is a theory of the creation of prosperity, not of moral cultivation or the emergence of world government. Still, the transnational prosperity that Smith describes does have properly political implications, and the present essay attempts to determine them” (100 note 2). Despite the myriad implications that can be drawn from Smith’s treatise, Easton seems to ignore the fact that Smith intentionally left politics out of his discussion. This is not to ignore what Easton quite rightly points out, that we can extrapolate political implications from the text, but in so doing, part of Smith’s point regarding the superficiality of politics in the creation of prosperity is undermined.

Though Edgeworth defines Glenthorn in economic rather than political terms, politics are inescapable, as seen in his involvement or lack thereof with the 1798 rebellion. As their landlord, Glenthorn’s rebellious tenants expect him to lead them in rebellion against the English. This feudal tradition of barons maintaining dependents in order to have an army to march against the king is one that Glenthorn, wanting no part in the rebellion, rejects; through his refusal to lead his tenants in rebellion,

³¹ Sydney Owenson’s *Wild Irish Girl* is a particular example of efforts to combat this kind of cultural stereotyping.

however, he makes an inherently political gesture as to his loyalty, which is not only opposite to that of his tenants but further removes him from the politics and historical social category that his tenants represent. Much of what Glenthorn and, similarly, Colambre in *The Absentee*, witness in Ireland is intended to seem as though the characters have symbolically stepped back in time, where Ireland is on the same developmental trajectory as England but a phase behind. The tenants' feudalistic desire to have their landlord, effectively their social leader, lead them in rebellion against the ruling authority is emblematic of this developmental discrepancy.

Rebellion in the guise of nationalism is portrayed by Edgeworth as an unproductive means of protest and change. It has often been noted how physically close the Edgeworths were to the violence of the 1798 rebellion, and the impact that must have had on Edgeworth as a writer; though the Edgeworths supported Ireland's union with Britain, despite Richard Lovell Edgeworth voting against it, the violent means through which the United Irishmen sought to convey their nationalism and implement, or prevent, change, was clearly not advocated by Edgeworth. The nationalistic fervour of one of her most interesting female characters, Lady Geraldine in *Ennui*, however, reveals the complexity and seemingly contradictory equivocality in Edgeworth's representation of nationalism. Shortly after his arrival in Ireland Glenthorn meets Lady Geraldine, with whom he fancies himself in love, though she it turns out is in love with the penniless Cecil Devereux. Marilyn Butler discusses the centrality of Lady Geraldine, whose refusal of Glenthorn's proposal "is one of those satisfying upsets [...] by which novelists of the period [...] lightly queried society's structures of power" (Introduction 42). Lady Geraldine is a "an Irish patriot and spokesperson" (Butler, Introduction 42), and it is "special to Edgeworth that Glenthorn meets Lady Geraldine between 1796 and 1798, when Anglo-Ireland is toppling and Irish nationhood is asserting itself" (Butler, Introduction 43). The reason Lady Geraldine rejects Glenthorn is that he is a "nobody" (205), or rather, "she is not satisfied that his rank makes Glenthorn a somebody" (Butler, *Maria* 373). "It has been Lady Geraldine's function to show Glenthorn what an Irish gentleman should be, just as it is M'Leod's to try to teach him to be a landlord. [...] Her view, and M'Leod's, is that a landowner has a specific social and economic role which it takes education to play" (Butler, *Maria* 373). Because Glenthorn has not yet absorbed the lessons requisite to make him an effective landowner, Lady Geraldine considers him to be

too insignificant for her notice. Despite his rejection, however, Glenthorn aids Cecil in acquiring a position in India, which, as Butler argues, is for Lady Geraldine's benefit as much as it is for Cecil's: "Prevented by her gender, her relative poverty and the masculine/colonial system from doing anything worthwhile at home, Lady Geraldine escapes to India to play her 'natural' role, which is frankly one of governing" (Introduction 44). In sending Lady Geraldine and Cecil off to India,

Edgeworth emphasizes their civilian role. Their appointment [...] seems the natural consequence of Ireland's incorporation in the heart of the empire. The Irish must henceforth claim their full share, with the English and Scots, in Britain's mission to bring prosperity, stability and some version of Protestant individualism to populations caught until then in systems breeding only poverty, superstition and inertia. (Butler, Introduction 44)

Because Cecil and Lady Geraldine are "blocked [...] from leading the Irish out of much the same plight" (Butler, Introduction 44-45), they must take their skills and desires for improvement elsewhere, while Glenthorn, it seems, is destined to bring prosperity and stability, if not Protestantism, to his own estate. Cecil and Lady Geraldine's "block" is one of means rather than rank or religion; both are Anglo-Irish gentry, intelligent and passionate in their defence of Ireland, yet they do not have the independent income to support the improvements they would like to implement at home and so it devolves on Glenthorn to act as the reformer despite the fact that his English identity, regardless of his Irish birth, makes this saviour status suspect.

Rather than reading Lady Geraldine and Cecil as participants in the colonial project, carving out pieces on behalf of Ireland, Katy Brundan sees Lady Geraldine as too volatile a voice for Ireland; her departure with Cecil to India is less an opportunity to govern for Ireland and more of a banishment. Brundan sees Lord Edward Fitzgerald and his "revolutionary cosmopolitanism" as Edgeworth's model for Lady Geraldine (127): "Lady Geraldine represents a spirited, rebellious nationalism tied to a slightly suspect cosmopolitanism that ultimately appear to be rejected in the novel, despite their evident attractions" (128). Lady Geraldine rejects the infiltration of English culture: "O! my dear countrywomen, let us never stoop to admire and imitate these second-hand airs and graces, follies and vices. Let us dare to be ourselves!" (225). However, as Brundan points out, Lady Geraldine "seems to have internalized French culture without acknowledging its own 'second-hand' status" (129-30). Though Lady Geraldine touts Irish pride in her rejection of English culture, she is still rendered suspect by her adoption of French

manners, customs, and language; her exportation of this “cosmopolitanism” or cultural hybridity to India suggests a further complication. Lady Geraldine rails against the impact of English culture and practices on Ireland:

‘Go on, my friends; go on, and prosper; beg and borrow all the patterns and precedents you can collect of the newest fashions of folly and vice. Make haste, make haste; they don’t reach our remote island fast enough. We Irish might live in innocence half a century longer, if you didn’t expedite the progress of profligacy; we might escape the plague that rages in neighbouring countries, if we didn’t, without any quarantine, and with open arms, welcome every *suspected* stranger; if we didn’t encourage the importation of whole bales of tainted fineries, that will spread the contagion from Dublin to Cork, and from Cork to Galway!’ (223)

Brundan reads this as Lady Geraldine’s denunciation of “English cultural colonization,” with a “radical, disruptive edge. It seems as though Lord Edward’s egalitarian principles and anti-imperialist republican sympathies find an echo in the novel at the level of domestic, ‘feminine’ concerns” (130). This is not, however, simply at the level of the domestic. What Brundan misses is the anti-Smithian nature of Lady Geraldine’s rant. In trying to protect the “innocence” of the Irish through preventing the importation of fashions from England, Lady Geraldine does more than infer “a kind of imperialist rape” (Brundan 130), she denies Ireland’s ability to trade and exchange with England; in railing at her peers not to encourage “bales of tainted fineries,” she asks them not to allow for the flourishing of commercial trade and thus the social progression that, according to Smith, inevitably follows. Lady Geraldine’s desire for a quarantine to protect Ireland from outside influence, though perhaps intended at the level of culture, is un-Smithian in its protectionism. Though as Brundan reads it Lady Geraldine’s rant does have a radical edge, there is more going on in this passage and the novel’s subsequent treatment of Lady Geraldine than Brundan acknowledges: given Edgeworth’s advocacy of Smith throughout the novel, Lady Geraldine’s departure for India results from her inability to see the economic and social benefit to Ireland of trade with England; given that her role in India is, at Butler points out, to govern, Lady Geraldine’s political role prevents her from participating in a more Smithian one. That Cecil and Lady Geraldine must rely on patronage to secure the post within the Indian colonial system, where patronage is rampant, additionally marks Lady Geraldine as part of an antiquated unSmithian system. Because Edgeworth sees Smith as the way to improve Ireland, Lady Geraldine’s overt resistance to the tenets of his theory means that there is no place for her in a Smithian Ireland.

Cecil and Lady Geraldine's pursuit of careers in India, though the details are left vague, raises the issue of work within *Ennui*, or more specifically Edgeworth's treatment of professions. Edgeworth's valourisation of professionalisation particularly within the context of her use of the political in an otherwise Smithian agenda for the economic and social advancement of Ireland is an issue largely ignored by critics. After learning that he is not the true Earl of Glenthorn, Glenthorn abdicates his title in favour of his foster brother, Christy O'Donoghoe, who agrees to Glenthorn's proposition of an annuity of £300 which allows him to maintain his classification as a gentleman. Despite this annuity, Glenthorn pursues a career as a lawyer under the guidance of Lord Y— in order to prove himself worthy of his love interest, Cecilia Delamere, and maintain her in the style to which she has been bred as heir at law to (conveniently) the Glenthorn estate. Glenthorn's transformation is a representation of the value of labour espoused by Smith and supported by Edgeworth. Though his chosen profession of law is among those listed by Smith as unproductive labour in that it does not produce anything that can then contribute to the local economy, he does labour nonetheless in his studies; from an indolent individual, unengaged with the people or the economic, social, and political issues around him, his desire "to distinguish myself among men, and to win the favour of the most amiable and the most lovely of women" dissolves "the enchantment of indolence" and permanently casts out "the demon of ennui" (305). In fixing Glenthorn's transformation, with his new found honourable industriousness, to the point where he rescinds his claim as a landowner with all of the social, political, and economic advantages inherently attached to it, Edgeworth underlines not only the social, moral, and economic worth of professional pursuits, but nods towards the political implications inherent in a law career.

For Smith, professions, and individuals' division into different professions, arises out of human "propensity to truck, barter, and exchange one thing for another" (Book I 117); "[...] the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions [...] is not upon many occasions so much the cause as the effect of the division of labour" (Book I 120). Smith argues that men are very much the same, and differences arise as a result of "habit, custom, and education," "but without the disposition to truck, barter, and exchange, every man must have procured to himself every necessary and conveniency of life which he wanted. All must have had the same duties to perform, and the same work to do, and there

could have been no such difference of employment as could alone give occasion to any great difference of talents” (Book I 120). Because of the division of labour – the fact that individuals have different skills and can offer those skills in exchange for the produce of the skills of others, thus producing a more efficient system for providing for individual needs – and the human propensity to exchange, different professions arise.

To excel in any profession, in which but few arrive at mediocrity, is the most decisive mark of what is called genius or superior talents. The public admiration which attends upon such distinguished abilities makes always a part of their reward; a greater or smaller in proportion as it is higher or lower in degree. It makes a considerable part of that reward in the profession of physic; a still greater perhaps in that of law; in poetry and philosophy it makes almost the whole. (Book I 209)

This admiration and excellence is what Glenthorn strives for and hopes to achieve, as expressed in his desire “to distinguish myself among men” (305). The level of exertion put into a given profession “is always in proportion to the necessity they are under of making that exertion” (Book I 348); the necessity will always be highest for those whose income is solely based on their profession and, “where the competition is free, the rivalry of competitors, who are all endeavouring to jostle one another out of employment, obliges every man to endeavour to execute his work with a certain degree of exactness. [...] Rivalship and emulation render excellency, even in mean professions, an object of ambition, and frequently occasion the very greatest exertions” (Book I 349). Interestingly, in the context of making money rather than spending it through the consumption of goods, emulation is acceptable, even encouraged as a means of raising higher expectations and greater productivity. Excellence and distinction are, in theory, necessary in order to earn greater “emoluments” (Book I 348), so competition and rivalry become necessary in order to gain these and mark an individual within his profession.

In valourising professionalisation, Edgeworth goes beyond Smith’s theory of labour and the value placed on that labour. If Edgeworth were strictly following Smith’s agenda, Glenthorn would not go off and become a lawyer, but rather a merchant; for Smith, landowners would be more effective in their creation and utilisation of wealth if they were more commercially minded and behaved more like the land-seeking merchant class:

A merchant is accustomed to employ his money chiefly in profitable projects, whereas a mere country gentleman is accustomed to employ it chiefly in expense. The one often sees his money

go from him and return to him again with a profit; the other, when once he parts with it, very seldom expects to see any more of it. [...] A merchant is commonly a bold, a country gentleman a timid undertaker. (Smith Book III 507-508)

In terms of the cultivation of wealth, Smith is an advocate of the upwardly mobile merchant class because of the productive industriousness and wealth creation they embody. In his aristocratic breeding and marital ambition, however, Glenthorn is not commercially minded but follows one of the traditional professions. Though Smith includes lawyers among his list of unproductive labours, Glenthorn's profession could be seen as a kind of specialisation, a representation of the division of labour.

Unlike Glenthorn and his new-found profession, landowners are not specialists. According to the ideology of civic humanism, a landowner symbolises political power through the fact of his land ownership. As Barrell points out, the perspective of landowners was thought to be far wider than the narrowed perspective of those engaged in specialised labour; this broader vantage point, in theory, legitimates landowners' status as lawmakers and rulers. Through this perspective, uncorrupted by dependence on government or patrons, the theory of civic humanism suggests that the landowner is able to pursue the good of all more effectively than individuals potentially corrupted by interaction with commerce and mobile property. Smith, however, reformulates this tradition. Phillipson observes:

Given the social and political realities of modern Britain, [...] Smith pinned what hopes he had for the survival of a free society upon the intelligent and commercially-minded gentry whose very circumstances ensured that they would be responsible to a model of a commercial polity whose regions were far enough from the capital, from 'the great seat of scramble of faction and ambition', to be 'more indifferent and impartial spectators of the conduct of all' [(548)]. ("Adam Smith" 197)

Though the distance Smith refers to here, and the subsequent ability to be an impartial spectator, is in reference to the distance between the American colonies and Britain, the suggestion that the merchant class has the ability to "save" Britain is a significant departure from the former civic humanist traditions of James Harrington and Andrew Fletcher. Unlike his philosophical forebears, Smith is highly critical of the aristocracy, and "less contemptuous of the gentry" (Phillipson, "Adam Smith" 192); of "those who live by rent," Smith comments: "That indolence, which is the natural effect of the ease and security of their situation, renders them too often, not only ignorant, but incapable of that application of mind which is necessary in order to foresee and understand the consequences of any public regulation" (Book I 357).

The use of the word “indolence,” much repeated throughout *Ennui*,³² serves as a cue to indicate that though Glenthorn begins as the kind of landowner Smith ridicules, he shifts through the course of the novel.

In keeping with Smith’s opinions about the general uselessness of the aristocracy, and Edgeworth’s overall adherence to Smith, Glenthorn does not regain his title at the novel’s conclusion. Though Glenthorn regains his estate in the end, any power he has is largely symbolic; power he might have had as a titled landowner is rendered void through the dissolution of Ireland’s parliament, which presumably takes place while Glenthorn is studying law. The absence of any mention of the 1801 Act of Union is conspicuous, but in fact highlights Edgeworth’s attempts to avoid the political. Glenthorn’s lack of political power is two-fold – not only does Smith see indolent aristocrats as “incapable” of legislating effectively, but there is no Irish government to legislate nor would Glenthorn be a participant in that process if it did exist, having lost his title. The gaining of his degree, however, and his pursuit of a law career gives back to him, and symbolically to Ireland, a modicum of the self-determining power lost through Union if only in the fact that it is *law* that he studies.

Edgeworth’s Smithian critique of landowners extends to her treatment of the ways in which her protagonists consume. Glenthorn’s first marriage to an English heiress is motivated by a need for money. Unable to pay his gambling debts, Glenthorn files a lawsuit against his guardian for “a mine of money due me” (*Ennui* 149); failure to win his suit makes matrimony a necessary evil: “As a highwayman knows that he must come to the gallows at last and acts accordingly, so a fashionably extravagant youth knows that, sooner or later, he must come to matrimony” (150). Glenthorn admits that he has no real in-depth knowledge of women:

My opinion of women had been formed from the commonplace jests of my companions, and from my own acquaintance with the worst part of the sex. [...] In my imagination young women were divided into two classes; those who were to be purchased, and those who were to purchase. Between these two classes, though the division was to be marked externally by a certain degree of ceremony, yet I was internally persuaded, that there was no essential difference. (150)

³² La Bossière discusses the significance of the use of the word “indolence” in “Finessing Indolence: The Case of Edgeworth’s *Ennui*.”

Glenthorn's lack of respect for women is glaringly apparent and made more concerning by his tacit leveling of all women through marriage market exchange, regardless of virtue or reputability, as objects or commodities to be exchanged. The overtly financial motivations of his interaction with the marriage market presented here critiques a society more obsessed with money and material wealth than compatibility or marital happiness; Glenthorn's need of a wife whose fortune he can easily and readily consume creates a conflation between the person of his wife and the money she brings to the union. He chooses his spouse not for their compatibility or even her appearance, but "by the numeration table: Units, tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands. I was content, in the language of the newspapers, *to lead to the Hymenal altar* any fashionable fair one whose fortune came under the sixth place of figures" (150). Deplorable as the novel portrays this practice, the readiness with which his wife's family, "who wanted to purchase a coronet" (150), offer her up makes Glenthorn a partner in crime rather than the sole perpetrator.

His monetary consumption of his wife is not, however, coupled by sexual consumption. Irene Basey Beesemyer points out that his first marriage "remains unconsummated" (122); the cuckolding which leads to the marriage's dissolution "reminds us of his emasculation, his inability or lack of interest in satisfying his wife" (122). The only desire or passion driving the marriage is that of money, as Glenthorn suggests is also true of his wife: "I believe her chief idea of happiness in marriage was the possession of the jewels and paraphernalia of a countess [...]" (151). The absence of any other desire or attraction renders the union sterile. Like the second Lady Glenthorn, who becomes obsessed with outdoing her predecessors in terms of extravagance, the original Lady Glenthorn is more concerned with things, the trappings of her new title and station, rather than the wider scale of the duties that come with such a title. Just as the later Lady Glenthorn fills the castle with anyone willing to acknowledge her right to the title she comes to hold, and so displays her new found wealth and status with an ostentatious fervour, the first Lady Glenthorn displays her wedding trousseau: "My bride had one hundred wedding-dresses, elegant as a select committee of dress-makers and milliners, French and English, could devise. [...] These things were shown in London as a *spectacle* for some days [...]. The jewelers also requested

and obtained permission to exhibit the different sets of jewels: these were so numerous that Lady Glenthorn scarcely knew them all” (150-51).

Edgeworth uses the consumption performed by Lord and Lady Glenthorn as a means through which to underline Glenthorn’s indolence, but also the uselessness of his expenditures. Glenthorn buys in excess for his wife because he has no more edifying purpose for his money; he has no economic purpose or direction until he meets McLeod in Ireland, but even then, as we have seen, he does not spend his money wisely. Glenthorn’s consumption does not reach any kind of restraint or direction until after he loses his title and estate; once he is constrained to £300³³ a year and must make his money count, it suddenly serves a greater purpose. Upon Glenthorn’s arrival in Dublin after he has surrendered his title to Christy he rents accommodation and finds himself confronted with expenses of daily life previously unknown to him:

The mistress of the house, a North-country woman, was so condescending as to blow my fire, remarking, at the same time, that coals were a *very scarce article*; she begged to know whether I would choose a fire in my bed-room, and what quantity of coals she should lay in; she added many questions about boarding, and small-beer, and tea, and sugar, and butter, and blankets, and sheets, and washer-women, which almost overwhelmed my spirits. (293)

His landlady’s Scottish nationality is not a coincidence as it aligns her with Smith and McLeod, albeit less well-educated; though a minor character, she serves as initiator of Glenthorn’s education in how to live economically and consume with a purpose as well as within his means.

Lady Clonbrony in *The Absentee* is similarly situated to Lord Glenthorn’s earlier character; her excessive consumption is the reason the family find themselves in dire financial difficulty, resulting in the persecution of their tenants in Ireland. Initially presented as her misguided attempts to emulate and buy her way into London’s elite society, Lady Clonbrony’s consumption is judged by the novel as a reflection of her own vanity and insecurity, thus putting it on par with the likes of Mrs. Baynard’s consumption in *Humphry Clinker*. It becomes, however, an economic and social issue once Colambre investigates the family estate in Ireland. Colambre addresses his mother:

³³ Copeland points out that in Austen’s *Sense and Sensibility*, £300 a year is enough to make Edward Ferrars “‘comfortable as a bachelor’ [...] but ‘it cannot enable him to marry’ (284)” (29). Luckily for Glenthorn, he does not need to depend solely on his annuity after he marries Cecilia.

And at what expence have we done all this [forced themselves into fashionable London society]? For a single season [...], at the expence of a great part of your timber, the growth of a century – swallowed in the entertainments of one winter in London! Our hills to be bare for another half century to come! But let the trees go: I think more of your tenants – of those left under the tyranny of a bad agent, at the expence of every comfort, every hope they enjoyed! – tenants, who were thriving and prosperous; who used to smile upon you, and to bless you both! (200)

Lady Clonbrony's excessive consumption and degrading attempt to ingratiate herself with London high society result in lasting alteration to the family estate and the demoralisation and abuse of their tenants. Initial similarities between Lady Clonbrony and *Humphry Clinker's* Mrs. Baynard abound: both women alter family estates to their degradation, both are excessive consumers who bring the family to the brink of financial ruin, and both rule over their husbands to the spouse's figurative emasculation. However, despite these similarities, her initial resistance to the changes her son demands, and her continuing silly character, Lady Clonbrony is allowed redemption by the novel whereas Mrs. Baynard is killed off. The realisation that Lady Clonbrony's resistance to returning to the Irish estate is based on her hatred for "that old yellow damask furniture, in the drawing-room at Clonbrony Castle –" (202) not only reveals her perpetually shallow understanding of the importance of their presence at the estate, but also that she has the potential to reform her habit of excessive consumption. Rather than insisting on refurnishing the castle once they return despite how much "I should like to do it myself"(202), Lady Clonbrony accepts and runs with the suggestion of Grace to bring their current London furniture with them over to Ireland. She responds to Grace: "'[...] that never struck me before, Grace, I protest – and what would not suit one might sell or exchange here – and it would be a great amusement to me – and I should like to set the fashion of something better in that country'" (202). The willingness to engage in commerce – to sell and exchange – and take pleasure in it is something Mrs. Baynard, presumably, would never have condescended to do; Lady Clonbrony's desire to raise the standards in Ireland, if only in fashion, implies a desire to see the Irish progress socially and bring them up to the economic level of England. Unlike Lady Geraldine, and certainly unlike Mrs. Baynard, Lady Clonbrony is allowed to live in Ireland and survive through the novel's end because she accepts the Smithian precepts advocated by her son and agent Burke, and does not engage with the politically charged issue of nationalism confronted by Lady Geraldine. Though Lady Clonbrony's antipathy for Ireland is founded in her dislike for the yellow damask, the

precedence of fashion rather than national loyalty still maintains its dominance in her character, thus rendering her “safe” from the complications of nationalism.

The consumption performed by Glenthorn and his first wife as well as that of Lady Clonbrony stands in contrast to the consumption performed by Edgeworth’s native Irish characters. Butler argues that “Ellinor is something rare and perhaps new as yet in literature, a peasant character who is treated with respect. Instead of laughing at her or patronising her, Maria accepts that hers are the attitudes of a woman of her race and class” (*Maria* 370-71). I would argue, however, that the respect the novel gives with one hand, it takes away with the other. Despite the love Ellinor has for Glenthorn, and the growing affection and gratitude he feels for her, she is nonetheless regarded by the novel as emblematic of the backward barbarity seemingly inherent in the native Irish. Glenthorn builds an English-styled cottage for Ellinor, complete with luxuries intended for her greater comfort: “I fitted it [the cottage] up in the most elegant style of English cottages; for I was determined that Ellinor’s habitation should be such as had never been seen in this part of the world” (*Ennui* 189). Glenthorn admits here that the cottage is built as an extension of his own ego, that is, to make himself feel good – “I was pleased with myself for my gratitude to this poor woman” (187) – and look good in the eyes of his tenantry and others of his own rank. Because the cottage is built through at least partially selfish motivation, it is fitting that its reception is less enthusiastic than he would wish:

Ellinor seemed, alas! to have as little taste for the luxuries with which I had provided her as the pig had for the silver trough. What I called conveniences were to her encumbrances: she had not been used to them; she was put out of her way; and it was a daily torment to one of her habits, to keep her house clean and neat. [...] Her ornamented farm-house became, in a wonderfully short time, a scene of dirt, rubbish, and confusion. (199)

Because the house is not well made, everything becomes damp and Ellinor develops rheumatism; when she asks Glenthorn to replace the slated roof with a thatched one to make it warmer he becomes disproportionately angry: “In my life I never felt so angry. I was ten times more angry than when Crawley ran away with my wife. In a paroxysm of passion, I reproached Ellinor with being a savage, an Irishwoman, and an ungrateful fool” (200). Ellinor accepts the accusations of being a savage and a fool, though staunchly denies that she is ungrateful. Her proposed alteration to his gift, in making the house more “Irish” through thatching the roof, and the house’s rapid devolvment into the kind of barbarity he

intended to make a point of raising her out of, signals not only that she is, as Glenthorn sees it, not “civilised” enough to appreciate the luxuries he has provided, but that she actually prefers her previous less refined mode of living. In attempting to alter the house, however, she attempts to make the cottage her own – a metaphorical consumption that Glenthorn resists. Though the luxuries referenced by Glenthorn are never specifically enumerated, the tacit rejection of them by Ellinor, that is, her failed consumption of these items, and her seeming criticism of the house itself imply a rejection of the material-driven culture from which the cottage and its accoutrements originate. While her preference for less luxurious and fashionable elements signals her barbarity to Glenthorn, the excess of his rage signals the cruelty of his reaction to the reader; the humour in the house’s near-destruction, however, in being picked apart for firewood and other uses, undercuts this cruelty to make the Irish the butt of the joke even while it censures Glenthorn’s reaction. Not unlike Geraldine’s rant against the importation of English luxuries, Ellinor’s unwillingness to consume the luxury items that are emblematic of an advanced commercial society signals not only that this society is not on par with that of England, but that it is unwilling to accept the proffered assistance to achieve that advancement. Glenthorn reflects back on his initial reaction:

In the pettishness of my disappointment, I decided that it was in vain to attempt to improve and civilize such people as the Irish. I did not recollect, perhaps at that time I did not know, that even in the days of the great queen Elizabeth, ‘the greatest part of the buildings in the cities and good towns of England consisted only of timber, cast over with thick clay to keep out the wind. The new houses of the nobility were indeed either of brick or stone; and glass windows were then beginning to be used in England:’³⁴ and clean rushes were strewed over the dirty floors of the royal palace. In the impatience of my zeal for improvement, I expected to do the work of two hundred years in a few months: and because I could not accelerate the progress of refinement in this miraculous manner, I was out of humour with myself and the whole nation. (200-201)

Though Glenthorn critiques his own mentality and behaviour in hindsight, the patronising quality of his new “awareness” of Ireland’s delayed civilisation is clear, as is Edgeworth’s use of Smith’s stadial history to explain the disparity between England and Ireland. As previously noted, for Glenthorn, going to Ireland is like going back in time; Ireland is on the same developmental trajectory as England but at a different stage of development. The comparison of the current state of Ireland to that of England under

³⁴ Edgeworth’s footnote indicates that she quotes Sir George Shuckburgh’s observation in *Philosophical Transactions*.

Queen Elizabeth I underlines the patronising tone; the atrocities committed in Ireland under Elizabeth I, including the establishment of Plantations which established future Anglo-Irish hegemony, were still daily represented in the lives of the early nineteenth-century Irish as particularly witnessed in *The Absentee*. Glenthorn's rather flippant reference to Elizabethan England here, despite the acknowledgment of its lack of refinement, adds insult to injury in his assessment of the seeming incivility of the Irish. Glenthorn, like Smith, does not think of Irish history in political terms despite his inherently politicised position, thus the political legacy of Irish history, in particular the interactions between England and Ireland under the reign of Elizabeth, is glossed over to the detriment of Edgeworth's intention of encouraging the advancement of Ireland both socially and economically.

Edgeworth's evasion of the political only serves to highlight the fact that politics always resurface, yet the question of *why* the novels persist in ignoring the political remains. To suggest that Edgeworth simply forgets the political history and religious differences would be an inaccurate disservice; the oblique references that crop up in *Ennui* and *The Absentee* suggest that Edgeworth is very much aware yet consciously chooses not to engage with this potentially divisive material. Her lack of engagement suggests that the political is simply less important than the foregrounded economic issues at the heart of her novels. The background does not matter to Edgeworth, despite the disservice this omission may do to the Irish people, so long as the job of economically improving Ireland is achieved.

The consumption performed by Christy O'Donoghoe's wife in particular reveals Edgeworth's opinion of the native Irish. In her excessive consumption and material wastefulness she mirrors Glenthorn's own behaviour earlier in the novel, but rather than suffering from ennui, her problems stem from assuming a rank to which she is not suited. Though a seemingly insignificant character in that she is never named and not described until after her family takes possession of the estate, her ambition to be perceived as a Lady ultimately brings about the financial ruination and physical demise of her family and the estate, ultimately ushering in Glenthorn's return:

Glenthorn Castle he [McLeod] described as a scene of riotous living, and of the most wasteful vulgar extravagance. My poor foster-brother, the best-natured and most generous fellow in the world, had not sufficient prudence or strength of mind to conduct his own family [...]. Every instance that she could hear of the former Lady Glenthorn's extravagance and mine – and, alas! there were many upon record, she determined to exceed. (309)

Mrs. Baynard again serves as a useful comparison; like her, the second Lady Glenthorn is driven by emulation and a desire to out-do others in terms of expense and extravagance. Christy ultimately pins all of his misfortunes on “being overruled by my wife, who would be a lady, all I could say again it [*sic*]” (321). Christy, like Mr. Baynard, is overpowered by his wife yet rather than the paternal estate becoming encumbered with debt and altered beyond recognition in the name of fashion, Glenthorn Castle is physically destroyed by fire as a direct result of the excessive consumption of alcohol by the son, a habit encouraged by the excessive behaviour of his mother. The underlying motivation is still the same however – emulating a rank not their own and to which they have not the means to effectively aspire, whether monetarily with the Baynards, or in taste as with the second Glenthorns. Because Christy cannot wrangle his wife into a more moderate mode of spending he loses that which is most dear to him – his family and his sense of contentment. Rather than a critique of female conspicuous consumption, however, Christy’s wife’s excessiveness is attributed to her lower rank and Irish “barbarity”:

[...] his wife filled the castle with tribes of her vagabond relations; she chose to be descended from one of the kings of Ireland; and whoever would acknowledge her high descent, and whoever would claim relationship with her, were sure to have their claims allowed, and were welcome to live in all the *barbaric* magnificence of Glenthorn Castle. [...] Decked out in the most absurd manner, this descendant of kings often, as Mr McLeod assured me, indulged in the pleasures of the banquet, till, no longer able to support the regal diadem, she was carried by some of the meanest of her subjects to her bed. (309, emphasis added)

While Christy frets over having nothing to do and no useful way to spend his time, his wife makes a spectacle of herself through her drunkenness and undignified behaviour while quickly putting the family into “great difficulties for ready money, as they could neither sell nor mortgage any part of the Glenthorn estate, which was settled on the son” (316).

Far from encouraging any improvement on the estate, or using their new found wealth to aid others, apart from those hangers-on who placate her ego through acknowledging her claim to ancient royalty, Christy’s wife discourages her husband from any useful labour and is herself clearly opposed to labour of any kind. Glenthorn relates that Christy “[...] once made an attempt to amuse himself by mending the lock of his own room door; but he was detected in the fact, and exposed to such loud ridicule by his lady’s favourites, that he desisted, and sighing said to Mr McLeod – ‘And isn’t it now a great

hardship upon a man like me to having nothing to do, or not to be let do any thing?’” (310). Christy’s desire to work and be useful, coupled with his overall goodness, is one of the ways in which the novel counters conventional representations of native Irish, yet, like the double-edged portrayal of Ellinor, the fact that his family and peace are ripped away from him at the novel’s end suggests that there is a degree of unworthiness to Christy’s ascension to the Glenthorn title; his birth is not enough to make him worthy of it, as emphasised in his own self-derision, “a man like me.”

In his analysis of *The Absentee*, Jackson discusses the role of whiskey “as a synecdoche for the cultural difference and transgressive desires of the Irish peasantry [...]” (520). This significance is revealed through Colambre’s conversation with Larry Brady, where Larry explains the meaning behind the locals’ use of the word “potsheen” for whiskey, “‘beca-ase it’s the little whiskey that’s made in the private still or pot; and *sheen* because it’s a fond word for whatsoever we’d like, and for what we have little of, and would make much of [...]’” (*The Absentee* 144-45). According to Jackson:

Larry’s expansive definition of the Anglo-Gaelic word *potsheen* reveals the symbolic function of whiskey as a marker of the threatening desire and difference of peasants tied to a native Gaelic culture. By rendering the object of their desire as whiskey, Edgeworth tactfully eliminates the political threat from the unsatisfied needs of these exploited and disenfranchised people. (519)

However, as Jackson mentions in a footnote and attributes to Thomas Pakenham’s *The Year of Liberty: The Story of the Great Irish Rebellion of 1798*, “Whiskey houses were also widely used as rebellion meeting places” (Jackson 518, note 38); given this historical fact, and Jackson’s further assertion that “Colambre begins the process of redemption [of “his colonized dependents” (519)] by imposing a vow of sobriety upon Larry Brady” (520), whiskey and its consumption are indeed highly political. Though the tenants on Colambre’s estate may articulate a desire for whiskey rather than a desire for political independence from Britain, the whiskey itself becomes politicised through the synecdochal relationship present but unarticulated in Jackson, particularly when he observes that “Colambre’s contract with Larry [to give up whiskey] symbolically completes the Union of 1801” (520).

By extension then, the role of whiskey in *Ennui* deserves some attention. Drunkenness in particular plays a pivotal role in the demise of the second Earl of Glenthorn’s family; as mentioned, the castle burns down because Christy’s son Johnny goes to bed drunk with a lighted candle. Prior to this,

Christy pleads with his son to “‘refrain drinking whisky *preferably* to claret’: the youth pleaded both his father’s and mother’s examples [...]” (*Ennui* 317). After his ascension to the Glenthorn title, “Christy, instead of being at the forge, was almost every day at the whiskey-shop” (286). These two instances of whiskey consumption, rather than signifying an overtly political implication are stronger indications of class association: Christy wishes Johnny to drink claret rather than whiskey because it is a more gentrified drink. Instead of his former usefulness when labouring at the forge, Christy now embodies the listless unproductiveness of the aristocracy, as demonstrated generationally in *Castle Rackrent*. Rather than a signifier of the *completion* of the 1801 Union, as Jackson suggests Edgeworth patronisingly posits, the cataclysmic overindulgence in whiskey, resulting from a lack of the kind of social contract seen in Colambre’s “saving” sobriety contract with Brady, suggests a *failure* of Union.

The consumption of whiskey plays a significant role in the demise of several characters in Edgeworth’s *Castle Rackrent*. While whiskey is used to stereotypically define Irish culture rather than politically challenge or question landlord/tenant relations in Edgeworth’s first Irish novel, consumption of it is still integral to the plot. Like the second Lady Glenthorn and Lady Clonbrony, the Rackrents’ standard of nobility is based on money and the extremes of consumption. Butler attributes the name Rackrent to a passage from Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* concerning the expenses of tenant-farmers and the differentiation between productive and unproductive proprietors in which he references the farmer’s “racked rent” (Book IV 250, referenced in Butler’s Introduction note 41), thus marking the Rackrents as unproductive proprietors. As told by the faithful family servant Thady Quirk, the Rackrents, whose right to that name and estate was dependent on abandoning the name O’Shaughlin, as the Glenthorns abandon the name O’Shaughnessy and, it is implied, the Catholic religion, are a family inclined to excessive consumption, particularly of whiskey – both Sir Patrick and Sir Condy die of alcohol-related causes and are deeply in debt, Sir Patrick to the extent that his corpse is seized. Sir Murtagh is on the opposite end of the spectrum with his miserly practices and neglect of social protocol in providing remembrances for his tenants; rather than seeing whiskey as a means of placating tenants and maintaining positive relations between tenant and landlord, Sir Murtagh views the distribution of whiskey as a waste of money: “[...] the cellars were never filled after his death, and no open house, or any thing as it used to be; the tenants were

sent away without their whiskey. I was ashamed myself, and knew not what to say for the honour of the family [...]" (68). Edgeworth's glossary to *Castle Rackrent* indicates: "It is usual with some landlords to give their inferior tenants a glass of whiskey when they pay their rents. Thady calls it *their* whiskey; not that the whiskey is actually the property of the tenants, but that it becomes their *right* after it has been often given to them" (127). Setting the patronising tone of the glossary entry aside, the indication that the tenants, due to the regularity of the offer, come to see "their whiskey" as a right suggests that Thady is correct in worrying about the honour of the family after this snub. The lack of social leadership discussed earlier applies here as well; though the other Rackrents have their flaws, they maintain the social hierarchy in such a way as to support and strengthen the family's position in the community. Rather than too great a desire for drink, Sir Murtagh has a "lust for lawsuits" (116) and his death results instead from a burst blood vessel caused by a vociferous argument with his wife over money; rather than over-indulgence, his miserliness and perhaps an excess of passion adhering to it leads to his death. Like his relatives, Sir Kit is similarly afflicted with a penchant for excess, though his particular vice is gambling; like Lord Glenthorn, Sir Kit is forced to marry in order to attempt to pay off his debts. Though, according to Thady, the tenants genuinely mourn the deaths of some of the Rackrents, there are no "improving" landlords among them, rather, all four of the Rackrent men are more concerned with their own comfort and enjoyment than they are with fulfilling their civic duty or making the estate more productive. The Rackrents, like the first and second Glenthorns, are defined by their habits of consumption; all fulfill the role of the landlord a little too well but it is only the second Glenthorns who are in any way objects of derision, despite the comically exaggerated habits and behaviours of the various Rackrents.

Castle Rackrent is Edgeworth's most overt foray into the use of dialect and utilisation of the perspective of a "lower" rank to convey the actions and motivations of the gentry, yet it is not her only Irish novel to do so. Both *Ennui* and *The Absentee* conclude with letters from peasants (by education, if not by birth in the case of Christy O'Donoghoe) expressing the culminating shift in their lives brought about by the actions, whether direct or indirect, of the novel's protagonist. Glenthorn's narration seemingly concludes before the novel actually ends; apart from the brief addendum from Glenthorn, the final page and a half of *Ennui* are a letter from Christy informing Glenthorn of the destruction of the castle

and demise of Christy's family, adjuring him to return to the estate in a half-hearted attempt to return things to the way they were before the two reversed positions. Christy writes: "I will go back to my forge, and, by the help of God, forget what has passed [...]" (322). Glenthorn, however, makes it a point to assure the reader that he will do the opposite: "I flatter myself that I shall not relapse into indolence; my understanding has been cultivated [...]" (323); where Christy only wants to forget his more recent past, Glenthorn refuses to. Jackson discusses Larry Brady's letter to his brother at the conclusion of *The Absentee* and the events it depicts as a disruption of the novel's restoration of the Catholic ruling class, suggesting a "destabiliz[ation] of the present" based on the maintenance of "the difference of the past" (527). In Jackson's reading the potential for rebellion still simmers beneath the surface despite the seeming unity presented at the end; this is only possible through Larry's first-person letter rather than the novel's otherwise omniscient narration. Part of Larry's letter describes for his brother the tenants' burning of the duty turf after Burke, the estate manager, explicitly prohibits the burning of the Garraghtys, the former estate agents, in effigy:

Well, when I was disappointed of the *effigy*, I comforted myself by making a bonfire of old Nick's [Garraghty] big rick of duty turf, which, by great luck, was out in the road, away from all dwelling-house, or thatch, or yards, to take fire: so no danger in life or objection. And such another blaze! I wished you'd seed it – and all the men, women, and children, in the town and country, far and near, gathered round it shouting and dancing like mad! [...]. (262)

Jackson comments that "[a]lthough the novel portrays the practice of compelling tenants to perform 'duty work' in order to pay exorbitantly high rents as an unnecessary residue of feudalism, the peasants' reduction of their former agents to an exploitative process of production articulates a much broader opposition to labor that benefits their masters more than themselves" (526). Jackson's main concern with this passage, however, centres on the potential power of the dancing, "irrational crowd to spread throughout the Irish countryside" (526) rather than the labour implications. Given, as Butler has pointed out, Edgeworth's concern with productive and unproductive proprietors, the burning of the duty turf is symbolic of more than opposition to an "exploitative process of production"; more specifically, it is an opposition to the imposition of feudalistic unproductive labour which prevents the peasantry from engaging in more productive labour, which will eventually lead to social progress.

Despite the differing political implications that may be drawn from Edgeworth's portrayals of Irish and Anglo-Irish characters, the overarching message is not one of political change but rather solely of economic and social improvement. Though the depictions of Irish tenants' consumption in particular carry political tones, Edgeworth does not go so far as to suggest any kind of direct change to the political system that supports the maintenance of their relative subjugation to Anglo-Irish hegemony. Like Burney, who tentatively alludes to social change but conclusively supports the status quo, Edgeworth's portrayals of Irish culture and Irish individuals end up supporting the very stereotypes she sets out to combat. Edgeworth's ready acceptance of Smith's economic theory is clear despite the complications of its application to the early nineteenth-century political situation in Ireland; Edgeworth participates in Smith's rejection of politics because Ireland's problems cannot be solved through rebellion but rather through economic reform and development, yet despite this understanding Edgeworth still utilises the contemporary political context to drive and control the action and character development in her Irish novels. In their political and economic agendas, most strikingly through the use of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*, Edgeworth's works presage Scott's later critique of perceptions of Scottish backwardness. Edgeworth's equivocality regarding the role of the native Irish within Ireland's economy and requisite civic duties becomes less ambiguous in Scott's later treatment of Scots, as will be discussed in chapter six.

Before this discussion of Scott and Scotland, however, we examine a different utilisation of Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* through Burney's fourth and final novel, *The Wanderer*. Despite being set during the political turbulence of the 1790s, *The Wanderer* does not follow Edgeworth's more expansive national application of Smith's treatise. Rather, in a conflation of the public and the domestic, Burney uses Smith to illustrate the problems inherent within women's attempts at respectable labour; where Edgeworth uses Smith to raise the issue of productivity at the estate level, which has implications for the larger collective, Burney questions not only Smith's valuation of productiveness, but the value society places on labour in general as seen through the labour attempts of the heroine. Unlike the other novels analysed in this project, *The Wanderer*'s protagonist is not an excessive consumer and consumption within the novel takes a backseat to problems of production; however, as we will see, this only serves to highlight the ambivalent representation of consumption seen in Smith and adapted by Burney.

Chapter Five: Smithian Ambivalence and the Value of Labour in *The Wanderer*

Like Edgeworth's Irish novels, Burney's fourth novel, *The Wanderer* (1814), employs a Smithian political economy, but Burney's acceptance of Smith is not as clearly defined as Edgeworth's. Burney utilises Smith to address the economic and social roles of participants in Britain's exchange economy, namely producers and consumers; Smith's ambivalent representation of consumers and their consumption in particular is amplified in Burney's portrayal where, rather than accepting the economic principles of Smith's treatise whole-heartedly as Edgeworth has, Burney plays with and questions elements of his theory, thus amplifying and complicating the equivocalities and ambivalences present in *The Wealth of Nations*.

Rather than an assessment of politics, *The Wanderer* utilises the larger context of the French Revolution to situate itself within the genre of historical novels but then leaves political concerns behind to focus on economic ones. Julia Epstein, however, sees *The Wanderer* as an inherently political novel, arguing that critics who have "faulted Burney for evading politics" are "misreading" her intentions (177). Epstein argues that "Politics are indeed subsumed into the personal and familial travails of the heroine, but the absorption of the political into the personal, rather than evading, permits Burney to analyse explicitly the ideological impact of French revolutionary politics on the European social condition" (177). Building on the philosophy that the personal is political, Epstein focuses her discussion of *The Wanderer*'s politics as distinctly personal and domestically-oriented, thus losing the broader underpinnings of concerns of the state and governmental applications. Given, however, that the problems confronted by Juliet throughout the novel are economic rather than political, the context can be seen as the extent to which the novel makes use of politics.

In her introduction to the World Classics edition of *The Wanderer*, Margaret Doody discusses ways of interpreting *The Wanderer*'s genre, particularly in reference to the lasting influence of the French Revolution: "By the time it was finished, *The Wanderer* was, indeed, ostensibly a historical novel, offering its own contribution to the new genre which had been largely produced by response to the French Revolution" (xiii). Epstein similarly suggests that "*The Wanderer* is both a historical and a philosophical

novel [...]” (191). Burney writes in the novel’s dedication: “[...] to attempt to delineate, in whatever form, any picture of actual human life, without reference to the French Revolution, would be as little possible, as to give an idea of the English government, without reference to our own: for not more unavoidably is the last blended with the history of our nation, than the first, with every intellectual survey of the present times” (6). So pervasive is the influence of the French Revolution, then, that every contemporary novel is, in a sense, a historical novel. According to Doody, Scott’s generic innovation was less original than has perhaps been accounted for, suggesting that “Walter Scott came as a novelist upon a scene full of new works dealing with conflicts past and present; the first of his historical novels, *Waverley*, was published in the same year as Burney’s *The Wanderer*” (Introduction xiii). As Katie Trumpener argues in *Bardic Nationalism*, there were many other writers, Edgeworth among them, who influenced Scott’s development of the historical novel: “[...] most of the conceptual innovations attributed to Scott were in 1814 already established commonplaces of the British novel” (130). Given her own use of historical context, it is safe to assume that Burney was part of this “commonplace” innovation.³⁵ Burney does something in *The Wanderer* that is not present in her other works: her inclusion of a distinct time period and set of political and historical events in which to contextualise the action of the novel puts her final novel in line with other nineteenth-century historical novels. The novel is not “about” national or international politics, but it uses the historical context as a way of creating further depth and development of the heroine, the plot, and its discussion of political economy.

Smith’s treatise on political economy is integral to the novel’s treatment of labour, production and consumption, exchange, and debt. Part of Smith’s valuation of an exchange economy is based on the productivity of labour. Juliet’s goal in the first two-thirds of the novel is to independently support herself until she can be reunited with friends still trapped in France during the Reign of Terror. The ways in which Juliet attempts to earn money are divided, in Smithian terms, between productive and unproductive labour. For Smith the delineation between goods and services is clear: production of capital goods is

³⁵ As Doody points out in her introduction, *The Wanderer* is also “in some sense ‘haunted’ by the Gothic novel [...]” (xiv); influenced by William Godwin and Ann Radcliffe, “mystery and concealment, spying and flight are important elements [...]” Burney learned from those who would also be her successors (xiv). Where, then, *The Wanderer* falls within generic categorisation is open to some debate.

classed as useful or productive labour because it produces a physical object capable of returning profit; services are unproductive because they do not contribute in a like manner. Labours that “add to the value of the subject upon which it is bestowed” (Book II 429) are more useful and of greater value than those that do not. Those considered unproductive include:

[...] churchmen, lawyers, physicians, men of letters of all kinds; players, buffoons, musicians, opera-singers, opera-dancers, etc. The labour of the meanest of these has a certain value, regulated by the very same principles which regulate that of every other sort of labour; and that of the noblest and most useful, produces nothing which could afterwards purchase or procure an equal quantity of labour. Like the declamation of the actor, the harangue of the orator, or the tune of the musician, the work of all of them perishes in the very instant of its production. (Book II 431)

Smith does not deny the respectability of the unproductive labourers, and even includes the sovereign in his assessment, but as Smith’s focus is on the generation of wealth, the cultural or social value of these labours matters little within the purview of his project. Fleischacker summarises Smith’s take on labour to mean that “productive” labourers could sustain themselves and their unproductive counterparts, but unproductive labourers could not sustain both: “[u]nproductive laborers are a luxury, productive ones a necessity. [...] His [Smith’s] point is just that a country can afford to enlarge its unproductive sphere, however worthwhile it may be, only in proportion to the extent of its productive sphere” (134). Juliet’s labour is a mixture of both productive and unproductive labour, though none of her labours are resounding successes in terms of creating personal wealth.

Smith makes concessions, however, as Andrew Skinner makes clear, in suggesting that unproductive labourers may help offset the effects of economic development that “contribute to limit our capacity for moral judgment, especially as it affects the man of ‘low condition’ [Book V 383]”

(Introduction Books IV-V xlvii). Smith suggests:

The state, by encouraging, that is by giving entire liberty to all those who for their own interest would attempt, without scandal or indecency, to amuse and divert the people by painting, poetry, music, dancing; by all sort of dramatic representations and exhibitions, would easily dissipate, in the greater part of them, that melancholy and gloomy humour which is almost always the nurse of popular superstition and enthusiasm. (Book V 384)

Though Smith does not alter his original theory regarding the usefulness of productive and unproductive labour relative to the creation of wealth, he does suggest that there is a role to be played by unproductive labourers to offset the effects of more productive labour. Despite the potential hierarchy of labour created

through this division, Smith's concessions acknowledge that there is still value, if not economic value, in unproductive labour.

Anthony Brewer finds greater ambiguity in Smith's take on productive and unproductive labour through his stance on consumption and production of luxuries. Brewer suggests that in analysing the decline of feudalism, the shift in spending from hospitality to luxuries that Smith describes does not account for the necessary saving required by an increase in commercialisation and manufacturing: "Manufacturing employers need capital, and a switch of spending does nothing in itself to provide the necessary saving" (95). Brewer argues that Smith fails to acknowledge a third option for what landowners can do with their money:

The key point is that a rich man (or anyone with an income above subsistence) faces a three-way choice, between (a) spending on luxuries (b) employing domestic servants, and (c) employing additional productive workers, that is, saving and investing (or lending to someone who will invest). Smith simply ignored this complication. In his discussion of the decline of feudalism [...] he considered only the two-way choice between luxury and hospitality. In his discussions of productive and unproductive labour he considered only the two-way choice between employing one sort of worker or the other. (95)

Ignoring the productivity of luxury manufactures is, for Brewer, a flaw in Smith's representation.

For Burney the delineation between the value of productive and unproductive labour is less important than advocating for the value of all labour. Recognition of this value, rather than valuing it based on its usefulness, takes precedence; none of Juliet's labours, productive or otherwise, ever seem to earn her any money despite various wrangling over wages and accounts due. Juliet laments the ill treatment of producers and labourers at the hands of consumers:

Oh! if those who receive, from the unequal conditions of life, the fruits of the toils of others, could, – only for a few days, – experience, personally, how cruelly those toils are embittered by arrogance, or how sweetly they may be softened by kindness, – the race of the Mrs. Iretons would become rare, – and Lady Aurora Granville might, perhaps, be paralleled! (511)

Through the perils and ill-treatment of Juliet, the novel advocates the kinder treatment of labourers, or at least of those who are morally well-behaved and genuinely desire to labour. Based on this more moralistic stance on the value of labour, the delineation between productive and unproductive ceases to act as an indicator of value. Juliet's labour can, however, still be divided between productive and unproductive: as a contributor to the millinery produced at Miss Matson's, later at the mantua-maker's, and again as an

independent piece-worker, Juliet produces material goods for sale or commissioned order, but as a harp teacher, personal companion, and assistant to Gabriella in her haberdashery, Juliet provides services which are ephemeral and make no direct contribution to the economy.

After Juliet has embarked on her initial career as a music teacher, the vast majority of her students refuse to pay her, citing a variety of reasons: they only settle bills once a year, or they owe such a pittance that they would hate to insult such a gifted musician with such a paltry sum. Giles Arbe, the absent-minded but altruistic and good-natured cousin of the more selfish Miss Arbe, attempts to solicit payment from her debtors, in response to which Mr. Scope, one of Brighthelmstone's gentry, argues that debts to people who encourage luxury should not be honoured, unlike debts to people who are "useful" because luxury should, on principle, be repressed. For Scope and other members of the Brighthelmstone gentry, the useful labourers are the ones who provide them with their daily necessities, such as the butcher or baker, and as such deserve and can expect prompt payment. Performers and purveyors of luxury like Juliet should not be classed in the same category because "We can all live well enough without music, and painting, and those things, I hope; but I don't know how we are to live without bread and meat"

(323). Mr. Scope replies to Giles Arbe's defence of Juliet's request for her wages:

'But I presume, Sir,' said Mr Scope, 'you do not hold it to be as essential to the morals of a state, to encourage luxuries, as to provide for necessities? [...] Let me, therefore, Sir, ask, whether you opine, that the butcher, who gives us our richest nutriment, and the baker, to whom we owe the staff of life, as Solomon himself calls the loaf, should barely be put upon a par with an artist of luxury, who can only turn a sonata, or figure a minuet, or daub a picture?' (323)

Scope argues here for greater distinction "between the instruments of subsistence, and those of amusement" (324) where amusement, because it is unnecessary for survival, is less useful and therefore less worthy of notice either monetarily or in terms of social value. This judgment by Scope turns into a discussion of perception – just because the person on the receiving end perceives the music, dance, or art as luxury, does not mean that the person performing considers it in the same way. Scope's motivation in not wanting to encourage luxury – like Matthew Bramble in *Humphry Clinker* who wishes to evade the moral corruption that presumably comes along with the purchase and indulgence in luxuries, while also addressing fears among the upper ranks of the eliding of class distinction through purchasing of like objects – is different from Smith's. In reference to "[t]he common complaint, that luxury extends itself

even to the lowest ranks of the people, and that the labouring poor will not now be contented with the same food, clothing, and lodging, which satisfied them in former times [...]” (Smith Book I 181), Smith replies:

Is this improvement in the circumstances of the lower ranks of the people to be regarded as an advantage, or as an inconveniency, to the society? The answer seems at first abundantly plain. Servants, labourers, and workmen of different kinds, make up the far greater part of every great political society. But what improves the circumstances of the greater part, can never be regarded as any inconveniency to the whole. No society can surely be flourishing and happy, of which the far greater part of the members are poor and miserable. It is but equity, besides, that they who feed, clothe, and lodge the whole body of the people, should have such a share of the produce of their own labour as to be themselves tolerably well fed, clothed, and lodged. (Book I 181)

In the interest of creating a “flourishing and happy” society, Smith is not opposed to the pursuit of luxuries on the part of the poor, though, as Mike Marshall points out, Smith had a problem with spending on luxury because even though a switch in spending from retainers to luxury items promoted social and political stability, “it did nothing in itself to generate capital accumulation. Indeed, to the extent that it reduced saving, it conflicted with it” (638). Luxury spending for Smith was, then “double-edged” (Brewer 97, M. Marshall 638), or ambivalent.

Unlike many of her predecessors, particularly Smollett in *Humphry Clinker*, Burney does not engage in the moral debate regarding consumption of luxuries; instead she addresses the issue from the producer’s perspective. Scope’s stance, that purveyors of luxury should not be valued because of the nature of the service or produce they offer, is refuted by the novel through the character of Giles Arbe. As Juliet in the form of music teacher is a producer of luxuries, Arbe argues that her labour is just as worthy of recognition as that of the more “useful” butcher or baker. Because Juliet has laboured, and because she has fulfilled a demand and performed a requested service, she deserves to be paid and to have her labours valued by those for whom she labours, regardless of whether that labour results in a luxury or more “useful” item. Giles retorts:

‘Luxury? What is it you all of you mean by luxury? Is it your own going to hear singing and playing? and to see dancing and capering? and to loll at your ease, while a painter makes you look pretty, if you are ever so plain? If it be, do those things no more, and there will soon be an end of them! but don’t excite people to such feats, and then starve them for their pains. Luxury? do you suppose, because such sights, and such sounds, and such flattery, are luxuries to you, they are luxuries to those who produce them? Because you are in extacies to behold yourselves grow younger and more blooming every moment, do you conclude that he who mixes your colours, and covers your defects, shares your transports? No; he is sick to death of you; and longing to set

his pencil at liberty. [...] All the ease, and all the luxury are yours [...] for he does not pipe or skip at his own hours, but at yours [...]. He sings, perhaps, when he may be ready to cry; he plays upon those harps and fiddles, when he is half dying with hunger; and he skips those gavots, and fandangos, when he would rather go to bed!’ (325)

In this passage Giles Arbe calls attention to the need to value labour performed, regardless of whether or not society classes it as a “luxury,” and the vanity of those who contract with such “unproductive” labourers³⁶; Burney’s focus is not on the value of the usefulness of Juliet’s labour but rather on the labour itself as being worthy of value. In particular, Arbe draws attention to the fact that those who consume the supposed luxuries that Mr. Scope vilifies are themselves unproductive: “And all this, to gain himself a hard and fatiguing maintenance, in amusing your dainty idleness, and insufficiency to yourselves” (325). As members of the genteel rank, Mr. Scope and the rest of Brighthelmstone’s gentry are not under any expectation to work or labour, yet Giles’ criticism of their idleness and insufficiency seems to suggest that perhaps there should be a shift in this expectation - there should perhaps be the prospect of productivity or contribution to society, or, at the very least, an appreciation or awareness of the labour involved for those who keep them entertained. The gentry cannot find ways among themselves for sufficient entertainment or overarching purpose and are, in fact, dependent on the labourers whom they claim not to value. The seriousness of this indictment is undercut, however, by the eccentricity of Arbe’s character; despite his acknowledged kind good-heartedness, Arbe is a comical figure who, through his forgetfulness and lack of adherence to polite behavioural norms, is a character whom the reader is subtly encouraged not to take too seriously, thus his essential message is belittled in the very process of its conveyance.

The irony is, of course, that the “independently” wealthy of Brighthelmstone are dependent on labourers for more than just their entertainment. As none of them have professions or perform work in any capacity, all that they consume and use on a daily basis is provided for them through the labour of others. Though they (usually) pay for the services of the butcher and baker and pay wages to their servants, the financial independence that allows them to live without actively pursuing an income through employment or occupation is not necessarily regarded by the novel as more honourable than the labour

³⁶ Both Doody and Gillian Skinner in “Professionalism” discuss this passage in the context of treatment received by eighteenth-century performers and the unsympathetic treatment Juliet specifically receives. Both critics relate this back to the Burney family’s experiences as creative performers.

performed by others. Through their financial independence, the gentry are rendered dependent on the services and productivity of others in order to sustain their “independent” state. This dependence goes unnoticed and unvalued by the gentry, however, who even at the novel’s conclusion remain largely oblivious to the consequences of their dependence on producers and labourers.

Smith focuses throughout *The Wealth of Nations* on a society’s ability to create wealth, and though consumption is a key factor in this creation, Smith does not incorporate the consumer or consumption as central parts of his overall analysis. He does, however, interpret the centrality of consumption as a motivator of production, and thus of wealth, in his critique of the mercantile system as given fact:

Consumption is the sole end and purpose of all production; and the interest of the producer ought to be attended to, only so far as it may be necessary for promoting that of the consumer. The maxim is so perfectly self-evident, that it would be absurd to attempt to prove it. But in the mercantile system, the interest of the consumer is almost constantly sacrificed to that of the producer; and it seems to consider production, and not consumption, as the ultimate end and object of all industry and commerce. (Book IV 245-46)

Smith’s critique of mercantilism includes a critique of those mercantilist law-makers who ignore the importance of the consumer, favouring instead the interests of the producer while forgetting, it would seem, that consumer-driven demand drives producer-based supply. We are led to believe, then, that under Smithian political economy consumer interests will be more warmly addressed, as their importance is “so perfectly self-evident.”

Smith discusses the various benefits of commercial society throughout *The Wealth of Nations*. In his analysis of how commercial towns aid the countryside, Smith suggests there are three effects towns have on the country: towns provide “a great and ready market” for country produce (Smith Book III 508); inhabitants of cities, particularly upwardly mobile merchants, buy property in the country that would otherwise remain uncultivated, thus leading to greater improvement; finally and, according to Smith, most importantly, commerce “introduced order and good government, and with them, the liberty and security of individuals [...],” that is, commerce brings peace (508). Prior to the introduction of foreign commerce, a “great proprietor, having nothing for which he can exchange the greater part of the produce of his lands which is over and above the maintenance of the cultivators, consumes the whole in rustic hospitality at

home” (508). Because he has no other avenue through which to spend the surplus from his land, the proprietor expends it supporting others, thus surrounding himself “with a multitude of retainers and dependants who, having no equivalent to give in return for their maintenance, but being fed entirely by his bounty, must obey him [...]” (508). The dependency resulting from this arrangement gives the proprietor a significant amount of power: “They necessarily became the judges in peace, and the leaders in war, of all who dwelt upon their estates. They could maintain order and execute the law within their respective demesnes, because each of them could there turn the whole force of all the inhabitants against the injustice of any one. No other person had sufficient authority to do this. The king in particular had not” (510).

However, Smith argues that after the introduction of foreign commerce the wealthy landowner, tempted by foreign luxuries, began to spend his money on himself alone rather than using it for the maintenance of subordinates and dependents:

But what all the violence of the feudal institutions could never have effected, the silent and insensible operation of foreign commerce and manufactures gradually brought about. These gradually furnished the great proprietors with something for which they could exchange the whole surplus produce of their lands, and which they could consume themselves without sharing it either with tenants or retainers. All for ourselves and nothing for other people, seems, in every age of the world, to have been the vile maxim of the masters of mankind. As soon, therefore, as they could find a method of consuming the whole value of their rents themselves, they had no disposition to share them with any other persons. For a pair of diamond buckles, perhaps, or for something as frivolous and useless, they exchanged the maintenance, or what is the same thing, the price of the maintenance of a thousand men for a year, and with it the whole weight and authority which it could give them. The buckles, however, were to be all their own, and no other human creature was to have any share of them; whereas in the more ancient method of expense they must have shared with at least a thousand people. [...] [A]nd thus, for the gratification of the most childish, the meanest, and the most sordid of all vanities, they gradually bartered their whole power and authority. (Book III 512)

Despite his assertion that commerce is a good thing, most importantly that it brings peace and stability to previously warring parties in the countryside, Smith’s opinion of the barons’ consumption is clearly derisive. Smith continues:

Having sold their birthright, not like Esau for a mess of pottage in time of hunger and necessity, but in the wantonness of plenty, for trinkets and baubles, fitter to be the playthings of children than the serious pursuits of men, they became as insignificant as any substantial burgher or tradesman in a city. A regular government was established in the country as well as in the city, nobody having sufficient power to disturb its operations in the one any more than in the other. (514)

Smith's ambivalence regarding consumption is apparent in these passages. Though he asserts the benefits of an exchange-based commercial economy, where consumption plays an integral part, he lambasts the barons' purchasing of frivolous luxury items. Consumption leads to an economic and therefore social boon, though Smith qualifies this through a seemingly moral judgment on the absurdity of the consumed object.

The qualification of Smith's otherwise whole-hearted support for consumption through his judgment of the baron and his luxuries is particularly confusing within the context of eighteenth-century political economy; it is as if, in passing judgment on the baron's purchase, Smith has forgotten what the baron's retainers were for, and that through the buckles, or similar luxuries upon which the baron's wealth can be spent, these retainers (i.e. the baron's militia) cease to pose a threat to the stability of the government. Unlike the retainers, who appear abandoned in Smith's passage, merchants are not dependent on the baron individually and therefore owe him no obligation; there is no political attachment between the merchant and his customer, and so their relationship ends once the transaction is complete. Smith's judgment of the proprietor's purchase of the buckles seems to fly in the face of political economic theory; the consumer is portrayed as an idiot for exchanging his power and authority for a luxury item despite the positive effect this purchase has on the merchant and the economy. Rather than applauding the purchase, which contributes to the creation of wealth, Smith seems to look at it through a moral lens, which is not in keeping with political economy in general where moral judgment is unnecessary in the natural progression of public good through economic advancement.

Juliet's production of luxuries through her music lessons, albeit in the form of a service rather than a physical object like Smith's baron's diamond buckles, equates her with Smith's invisible buckle merchant who, though in the background of his rant, is the only honourable character present in that interaction. Smith, as we have seen, lambasts the baron but does not in any way fault the merchant for producing the object that results in his ire falling on the baron; the merchant is just doing his job and circulating money within the economy as a result. The fact that it is a luxury item matters less than the baron's motivation for buying it. Similarly, Juliet's "produce" of selling music lessons is not un-Smithian in terms of its luxuriousness but rather in its unproductive nature. The consumers of Juliet's service are

comparable to Smith's buckle-buying baron in the stupidity and idleness of their consumption which, unlike the buckles, does not contribute to the local economy especially as none of them except Mr. Tedman ever pay for what they consume.

The political economist's interpretation of Smith's buckle scenario stands in contrast to that of the civic humanist tradition, which sees the proprietor's relinquishing of his power and authority as detrimental rather than positive; as seen in chapter two's discussion of *Humphry Clinker*, Mr. Baynard's near loss of his estate through the influx of mobile, commercial property is seen as an unequivocal negative. In giving up his ability to support retainers, the baron gives up all political authority because he no longer has the ability to raise an army against the sovereign. Without the requisite clout that comes from having a personal army, the baron's ability to challenge the sovereign, ostensibly for the public good, disappears; public good for civic humanists was to be intentionally pursued and orchestrated through the political public sphere. For political economists, however, public good came about unintentionally through the natural progression of economics, thus the baron's loss of an army does not signify and the purchasing of objects like the buckles is a good thing because not only does it bring peace, but it contributes to the creation of wealth. Smith, however, conflates the perspectives of the political economist and civic humanist to a degree in his judgment of the baron's buckles, signaling ambivalence in his stance on consumption.

Smith's ambivalence is reflected and amplified by Burney's portrayal of consumers in *The Wanderer*, particularly those in Miss Matson's shop. "She [Juliet] found herself in a whirl of hurry, bustle, loquacity, and interruptions. Customers pressed upon customers; goods were taken down merely to be put up again; cheapened but to be rejected; admired but to be looked at, and left; and only bought when, to all appearance, they were undervalued and despised" (426). The shoppers' disregard for the products they handle and damage implies a disregard not only for the worker who must clean up their mess and deal with the loss of value to the item, but to the labour that went into the product itself which is represented by the cost of the item, now devalued because of their treatment of it. Burney's portrayal vilifies the selfishness of the consumer and, as in *Camilla*, critiques the practice of impolite shopping and rude shoppers:

The ladies whose practice it was to frequent the shop, thought the time and trouble of its mistress, and her assistants, amply paid by the honour of their presence; and though they tried on hats and caps, till they put them out of shape; examined and tossed about the choicest goods, till they were so injured that they could be sold only at half price; ordered sundry articles, which, when finished, they returned, because they had changed their minds; or discovered that they did not want them; still their consciences were at ease, their honour was self-acquitted, and their generosity was self-applauded, if, after two or three hours of lounging, rummaging, fault-finding and chaffering, they purchased a yard or two of ribbon, or a few skanes of netting silk. (426-27)

At first glance Burney's portrayal of consumers appears absolutely anti-Smithian, where consumption is anything but "the sole end and purpose of all production" (Book IV 245) but is rather a means of asserting social dominance and maintaining the social hierarchy. In this portrayal the consumer is not driving production or creating wealth but rather depleting value and, rather than buying luxuries or frivolities as a means of asserting wealth, use their dismissal of goods as a way of asserting social standing; the lack of expenditure here is just as much a statement of rank and importance as excessive consumption has been for characters previously discussed, such as Mrs. Baynard, the first and second Lady Glenthorn, or Lady Clonbrony. In keeping with Defoe's trade advice, the shopkeeper and her employees comply with the demands of shoppers with the expectation that a purchase will be made, when this fails to materialise the labourers merely appear to be at the service of the alleged shoppers in a relationship more akin to servant-master than merchant-customer. The mutually beneficial nature of the merchant-customer relationship is not present in this interaction, rather the shoppers' "[...] disregard to all representations of the dearness of materials, or of the just price of labour [...]" represents "[...] the total absence of feeling and of equity, in the dissipated and idle, for the indigent and labourious" (*The Wanderer* 427). Like Smith's baron, whose purchase of the buckles is vilified, Burney's portrayal of Miss Matson's customers shows a similar judgment: both consumers are necessary for the creation of wealth and stability but both are also criticised for the motivations behind their consumption.

Despite Burney's Smithian echo of the vilification of the motives of the consumer, the merchant, in an un-Smithian representation, is portrayed as equally at fault. Juliet's sympathy for the plight of merchants at the hands of consumers quickly decreases when she observes the way treatment of customers is dictated by rank and every advantage of the merchant over the consumer is exploited:

[...] she found that their [the milliner and her work-women] notions of probity were as lax as those of their customers were of justice; and saw that their own rudeness to those who had neither

rank nor fortune, kept pace with the haughtiness which they were forced to support, from those by whom both were possessed. Every advantage was taken of inexperience and simplicity; every article was charged, not according to its value, but to the skill or ignorance of the purchaser; old goods were sold as if new; cheap goods as if dear; and ancient, or vulgar ornaments, were presented to the unpractised chafferer, as the very pink of the mode. (427)

The ruthlessness of the marketplace is portrayed as predatory where the merchant must either exploit or consent to be exploited. The assertion of social standing and prevalence of rank seen in the way customers interact with and dismiss goods is simultaneously present in the way in which Miss Matson and her representatives assert their advantage over less experienced or less genteel clientele.

However, despite the novel's moral judgment of both consumer and producer (as milliner, Miss Matson and her employees are the labourers as well as the sellers), they are both still fulfilling their roles in an exchange economy: consumers consume, albeit perhaps with more consequences and in a smaller capacity than would be ideal, and their money enters into the local economy; Miss Matson creates and sells goods that appeal to the consumer, generating demand and driving further production and wealth creation. The *motives* of the participants in this exchange are the source of Burney and Smith's critique though the effects of their behaviour still adhere to a Smithian version of political economy; Burney's critique does not extend to the effects of consumption but rather focuses on the ungenerous behaviour of the leisured ranks towards those who labour and towards the produce, and therefore the value, of that labour. Similarly, Smith's indignation at the baron's purchase of the buckles reflects more on the baron's selfishness (forgetting, again, the role played by his retainers and dependents) than on the act of consumption.

The consumption that takes place within Miss Matson's shop is metaphoric as well as literal; the women who work for Miss Matson are often subjected to the gaze of customers, particularly men, as objects of visual pleasure, as with Juliet, or potential sexual conquest, as with Juliet's co-worker Flora Pierson. Miss Matson exploits Juliet's recent arrival from France, alleging that she brings with her "specimens of all the French *costume*" (429). This advertisement of sorts quickly spreads:

Such a report could not fail to allure staring customers to the shop [...]. This species of commerce [i.e. gossip, and conjecture as to who Juliet is], always at hand, and always fertile, proved so highly amusing to the lassitude of the idle, and the frivolousness of the dissipated, that, in a very few days, the shop of Miss Matson became the general rendezvous of the saunterers, male and female, of Brighthelmstone. [...] Juliet, at first, ignorant of the usual traffic of the shop,

imagined this affluence of customers to be habitual; but she was soon undeceived, by finding herself the object of inquisitive examination [...]. (429-30)

Juliet becomes an attraction for the idle of Brighthelmstone; like a shiny new commodity, Juliet attracts a parade of customers who do not wish to interact with or speak with her as much as they simply want to stare at her. In a reversal of the shopping scenario presented in chapter three with *Camilla*, Juliet is in the opposite role as the one selling rather than browsing or buying; but where Camilla as shopper was on the receiving end of the male gaze, Juliet as shopgirl is as well. Like Edgar's "shopping" for a suitable wife, Juliet's novelty and knowledge of current French fashion cause her to be, in effect, "shopped" for as well. The advertising of Juliet's first-hand knowledge of French style and the resulting increase in attention she receives presages the newspaper advertisements later in the novel which request information regarding her whereabouts and broadcast her as a swindler and eloper from her husband. These later advertisements include descriptions of Juliet which, apart from horrifying her delicate sensibilities, serve to further emphasise her commodification.

Henderson offers a Marxist interpretation of Juliet's commodification and Burney's advocacy for the value of labour in her article, "Burney's *The Wanderer* and Early Nineteenth-Century Commodity Fetishism." Henderson uses Marx's principle of commodity fetishism, which suggests that the use-value of an object becomes complicated once it becomes a commodity, that is, once money enters the picture. Rather than finding the value of an object through the labour used to create it, the consumer of the commodity sees the value in the object itself; the human connection between the product and the consumer (i.e. the labourer) is severed through the introduction of money and the relationship shifts from a social one between people to between things – money and the object (Felluga). According to Henderson, Juliet comes to represent the "new" nineteenth-century commodity whose price is fixed rather than negotiable, where the value of the commodity does not originate with the merchant's assessment of the consumer, but rather "seem[s] to reside in the objects themselves" (Henderson 7). The labourer or producer of the commodity and the value of his or her labour is cut out of the equation that determines value to the consumer, whose "experience of the market increasingly developed his or her sense of the centrality and autonomy of the commodity" (Henderson 8). The central relationship in shopping is no

longer between the customer and the merchant, but rather with the commodity itself. Henderson argues that “Burney constructs an elaborate labor theory of value and complains of the incommensurability of the value generated by the laborer and the value recognized by the consumer” (11). There is a disparity here, where “use value, like exchange value, is measured by the consumer at the point of consumption rather than at the point of production” (Henderson 12); the value of the producer’s labour is again cut out. As an “analog of the new commodity of the early nineteenth century” (Henderson 15), Juliet’s absence of personal desires, beliefs, or opinions – “her persistent opacity” (16) – “focus[es] and attract[s] the wishes of others while expressing none of her own” (15). This absence, her “opacity” and persistent resistance to revealing anything about herself make her identity “unstable” (Henderson 18), but this instability “underscore[s] her independence of and distance from her audience” (18); thus, for Henderson, Juliet’s commodification makes her “strikingly autonomous and powerful” (25). The fetishised commodity then ultimately serves, according to Henderson, as the “counterpart” to the worker, where “this new commodity’s potency serves not to empower the consumer but to signal the merits of labor” (30).

However, though Juliet’s identity may be unstable, it does not, as Henderson asserts, signal her independence but rather her social ostracism; the distance created is not through Juliet’s choosing but rather through her unwillingness (out of necessity) to reveal anything about herself. Rather than seeing Juliet’s commodification as the source of any autonomy she may have, I find Juliet’s *resistance* to this commodification a more compelling source of power but, again, one she does not actively seek but rather utilises out of necessity. When Juliet’s commodification reaches the point where Sir Lyell feels he has the ability to safely pursue and harass her in the public venue of the shop without retribution, Juliet resists her commodified status through quitting her position. More than a lack of empowerment to the consumer, Juliet’s sensitive morality attempts to shame the consumer into a greater appreciation of the perils of labour and production.

Henderson points out that the gaze is inherent to female labour:

[...] to be a *female* laborer is to be not just a machine and a manufactured product but a spectacular commodity as well: the women in Miss Matson’s shop are quite deliberately put on display before the customers, and most of Juliet’s ‘jobs’ [...] involve some element of display.

Like an automaton,³⁷ she embodies the very essence of the commodity as Marx describes it, an exotic display-object that seems eerily possessed of a life of its own. (17)

The public element of Juliet's labour at the milliner's is the main reason why she eventually quits her position, declaring to Miss Matson "that she found herself utterly unfit for so active and so public a line of life," but she also leaves because of "a pursuit the most licentious" on the part of Sir Lyell Sycamore (449) who comes to the shop to stare at and attempt to seduce Juliet. This metaphoric visual or "spectacular" consumption of Juliet is taken to a physical level through Juliet's co-worker, Flora: "This young creature, who had but barely passed her sixteenth year, had already attracted the dangerous attention of various officers, from whose several attacks and manœuvres she had hitherto been rescued by the vigilance of Miss Matson" (430). Deidre Lynch points out:

A prescient commentator on the emergence of a culture of consumption in Britain, [...] Burney habitually depicts the scene of consumption as one in which things and individuals (especially female individuals) seem to change places. [...] People for their part assume the characteristics of objects of consumption: commodities' hypervisibility, their abstract comparability through the medium of money, and, by extension, their asubjectivity. (165)

Miss Matson's is a place in which this changeability is seemingly welcomed by the nature of the work undertaken. Working in the shop exposes the women to inappropriate male attention, and because Flora lacks any awareness as to propriety or her own future welfare, she engages in a clandestine relationship with the town's notorious philanderer, Sir Lyell Sycamore, which Juliet thwarts, much to the chagrin of both parties. The shop becomes the site at which this affair begins and provides opportunity for its perpetuation; ostensibly seeking goods, Sir Lyell in reality seeks the sexual conquest and figurative consumption of Flora, and when that is thwarted begins a pursuit of Juliet. A setting for metaphoric and literal consumption, the shop, and the commerce practiced there, are potentially hazardous to virtuous female sensibilities, as with Juliet, and physical virtuousness, as with Flora.

Juliet leaves the commerce of the city, and its commodifying consequences, behind when she flees from the pilot who acts as the spy of her husband. Juliet's interaction with commerce in the country is decidedly different from that of the city; the primary difference being that she is not a producer trying to

³⁷ Park analyses the figure of the automaton in her article, "Pains and Pleasures of the Automaton: Frances Burney's *Mechanics of Coming Out*," as do Lynch and Johnson in their respective chapters on Burney.

turn a profit but rather is solely a consumer. In the country, Juliet has nothing to sell, she is merely a consumer purchasing a night's accommodation or a meal. It is this distance from the realm of production that perhaps instills in Juliet a more positive perception of rural commerce. The narrator relates a scene of country commerce: "Carts, waggons, and diligences, were wheeling through the town; market-women were arriving with butter, eggs, and poultry; workmen and manufacturers were trudging to their daily occupations; all was alive and in motion; and commerce, with its hundred hands, was every where opening and spreading its sources of wealth, through its active sisters, ingenuity and industry" (666-67). Lynch discusses the greater context of this scene:

The agoraphobia Burney is so good at inciting might invite us to read this as a moment when the market subsumes or even consumes the individual. This reading, however, would have to ignore how it is at this moment, after volumes of harassment, and even as crowds seem to gather and disperse, that the Wanderer is left alone and at peace. She finds her place in the state of circulation. [...] When they catch sight of 'the deep care in her countenance,' this society of marketwomen, workmen, and manufacturers see 'but an air of business' (667). She looks like one of them. (203)

Lynch's reading of this scene offers a positive version of commerce, where Juliet is solidly embedded within the marketplace, ostensibly producing useful products for which she receives appropriate recompense. I would argue, however, that despite this positivity and despite the idea that Juliet may look like one of them due to "the deep care in her countenance," she is not one of them, and though she participates in the economy of exchange and ultimately becomes an exchangeable commodity within the patriarchal system of exchange, she is not an active participant in this particular scene of commerce in which Lynch sees Juliet finding a "place." Nor, I would argue, is she at peace, having been shortly before this scene of commerce, rudely assailed by a passing carter who mistakes her for Deb Dyson, his promiscuous acquaintance. Rather than, as Lynch sees it, finding peace within her commercial place, it is only in the safety of the crowd that Juliet is left alone; her peace and safety have less to do with finding her place in commerce than it does with her anonymity as part of a crowd rather than as a solitary traveller. Though, as Lynch points out, Juliet "has brought her labor to the market before" (204), the novel goes to great lengths to point out that the marketplace is not Juliet's natural habitat and her involvement there is for a limited length of time; at this point in the novel Juliet's days as a commercial producer are over, and as such so is her engagement with the commercial market. Her place, then, at this

point is as a consumer only, and looks forward in time to when Juliet regains the rank and fortune to which her birth has entitled her, one which will allow her to never interact directly with the marketplace ever again. Her lack of interaction then, her very *lack* of place, is what defines the peace and comfort Lynch finds here rather than her participation in it.

The seeming peace found in the countryside and rural marketplace is underlined in Juliet's initial perception of the Simmers' farm, though this impression is quickly belied by the realities of the never-ending labour necessary to make the farm productive and successful.

Here, retirement would be soothing, and even seclusion supportable, from the charm of the scenery, the beauty of the walks, the guileless characters, and the vivifying activity of the inhabitants of the farm-house; and the fragrant serenity of all around. Here, peace and plenty were the result of industry; and primitive, though not polite hospitality, was the offspring of natural trust. If there was no cultivation, there was no art; if there was no refinement, there were integrity and good will. (694)

The rustic "primitive" nature of the farm and its occupants is outweighed by character and behaviour more honest and straightforward than that encountered in Brighthelmstone. Though this new setting bodes well for Juliet, the enchantment quickly fades:

The farmer, whose thoughts were absorbed exclusively in the interests of his farm, was always too busy to afford her [Juliet] any time, and too indifferent to give her any attention. [...] Farming, she soon found, he regarded as the only art of life worth cultivation, or even worth attention; every other seemed to him superfluous or silly. A woman, therefore, as she could neither plough the field, nor mow the corn, he considered as every way an inferior being; and, like the savages of uncivilised nature, he would scarcely have allowed a female a place at his board, but for the mitigation given to his contempt, from regarding her as the mother of man. (695-96)

As a consequence of his single-minded focus on production, Simmers finds no value in anything unrelated to farming, particularly in women whom "he only considered [...] as his servants" (696). Juliet's assets as defined by the narrator - her youth and beauty - hold no value in Simmers' world and so he regards her as entirely inconsequential; what the world of fashion, or the world of consumption, would see as having high value the farmer in the world of production sees as valueless. The consequence of so narrow a focus to the exclusion of all else is similar to Smith's acknowledgment of the deadening effects of the division of labour: "The man whose whole life is spent in performing a few simple operations [...], has no occasion to exert his understanding or to exercise his invention [...]. He naturally loses, therefore, the habit of such exertion, and generally becomes as stupid and ignorant as it is possible for a human creature

to become” (Book V 368). The enervating consequences of the division of labour also affect the moral perspicuity of the labourer: “The torpor of his mind renders him not only incapable of relishing or bearing a part in any rational conversation, but of conceiving any generous, noble, or tender sentiment, and consequently of forming any just judgment concerning many even of the ordinary duties of private life” (Book V 368-69). The sole focus of Farmer Simmers on the productivity of farming at the expense of culture, art, or relationships is presented as a lack, and a detriment to the family’s quality of life. Like Briggs’ myopic obsession with accruing and cultivating wealth in Burney’s *Cecilia*, Simmers serves as a caricature of too great a focus on production. Though agriculture is prized by Smith as a prime example of productive labour and means of creating wealth, agrarian life for Burney is too focused, lacking in artistic and intellectual stimulation; Simmers is not portrayed as evil or villainous because of his focus on production, but rather as less enlightened.

Inherent to the discussion of commerce is the principle of exchange, which has been a popular topic amongst Burney scholars’ discussion of the marriage market; I wish to extend the discourse as a means of analysing Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*. The fact that any discussion of the marriage market must inevitably include discussions of money and the exchanging of money, however, makes the omission distinct. Doody discusses the significance of the initials Juliet and the marchioness choose in order to keep correspondence addressed to Juliet anonymous, suggesting that these initials - L.S. - signify a denomination of money, L.s.d. for livre, shilling, denarius, or pounds, shillings, and pence; she argues that, “[t]he heroine in her false riddling denomination represents a means of exchange – as indeed she does, for Ellis-Juliet is a token of currency between the bishop and the commissary” (*Frances Burney* 329). Doody goes further in her introduction, suggesting that “[t]o be a woman and to come upon the economic world, the world of exchange, is to realize that one is seen as a medium and means of exchange. Women do not command a currency – they *are* a currency” (xvi). More than a token, women in Burney’s works, and *The Wanderer* specifically, are freely exchanged and are the very currency through which that exchange takes place. Doody, like Henderson, sees women’s commodification resulting in their becoming the objects of exchange transactions rather than the agents of them. Doody suggests that Burney critiques her society and the practice of female exchange and patriarchal protection: “Burney shows why we cannot

believe that the system of male patronage and protection actually works justly and fairly for women. In fact, in order to save a man (her friend the bishop) from the guillotine, 'Ellis' in France has had in effect to prostitute herself in undergoing marriage to the Commissary" (Introduction xxi). For Doody, Burney's heroine is far stronger and independent than Brighthelmstone society gives her credit for, and as such is a commentary on the treatment and perception of women in late eighteenth-century society.

Miranda Burgess offers a counter-argument to Doody's feminist reading of Burney's novel in her chapter, "Summoned into the machine." She sees "[t]he three romances Burney published between 1782 and 1814 [...] pioneer the new conservative subgenre of economic romance" (87). Burgess posits that Burney's economic romances adhere to an essentially conservative agenda where "Burney responds [to 'the long-feared decline of rank and family and the absolutes they stood for'] with an ancient ideal of marriage, a traditional contract between gentlemen, replacing circulating women and fluctuating worth with a stable system of value and exchange" (111-12). According to Burgess, Burney is a harsh critic of commerce (75) and the "tyranny of the marketplace" (73) because of a lack of regulation seen in the free circulation of women whose worth is based on an unstable and fluctuating measure of sentiment rather than the more traditionally conservative Tory standards of "kinship, honour, and birth" (97), and more fixed measures of wealth. Female worth is based on male demand and, "like the worth of a literary work subjected to the logic of commerce" (95), is subject to the instability of consumer demand. Burgess draws a correlation between Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act of 1753 and the Copyright Act of 1775: through the Marriage Act, "[t]he free circulation of goods (that is women) and capital (their dowries) through Britain was, at least in the marriage market, effectively curtailed" (74), and while the Copyright Act gave greater control to authors, the lifetime copyright bestowed on them through the Act "was to operate analogously to a father's and a husband's control of a woman from spinsterhood through marriage, governing letters, like courtship, as a matter in which real property was at stake" (74). Burney's ideal society, according to Burgess, is "a return to a world in which a woman's recognized value corresponds with her moral, genealogical, and financial worth; where marriage is a private agreement between a woman's father and the suitor he approves" (110) rather than one based on the fluctuating and unstable base of sentiment and credit, both social and economic. Like Doody, Burgess sees Burney commenting on the patriarchal

system of female protection and exchange, but unlike her predecessor, Burgess finds Burney to be far more conservative in the novel's conclusion; rather than the feminist-leaning interpretation of Doody, Burgess swings in quite the other direction, suggesting that Burney's heroine is safer and more highly valued in the more traditional patriarchal system of exchange.

However, if we apply Burgess's argument to Doody's assertion that women are currency, then Juliet becomes complicit in her own commodification. Burgess argues that Burney retreats to a conservative, traditional valuation of a woman's worth based on birth and wealth rather than the more unstable system built on sentiment and credit; this is seen in particular through the novel's conclusion when Juliet's betrothal to Harleigh is arranged solely by her male relatives. In her tacit acceptance of her male relatives' arrangements, Juliet is a *willing* participant in the transaction that effectively makes her the currency given to Harleigh in exchange for her newly-acquired wealth as well as her virginity and procreative capability. This is not then just a retreat into a more traditional patriarchal system of female "protection," but is an integration of modern commerce and monetary valuation of women within traditional patriarchy.

In her efforts to escape the, according to Burgess, unstable commercial world in which her value fluctuates depending on the demand for perceived virtue or sentiment, Juliet willingly if tacitly consents to the negotiations that take place in a bathing-machine (864) between her uncle, brother, guardian, and suitor which result in her being presented to Harleigh as a kind of offering: "[...] the Bishop took one hand, and the Admiral another, of the blushing Juliet, to present, with tenderest blessings, to the happy, indescribably happy Harleigh" (865). Though Juliet's blushes indicate her virtue and modesty, it is significant that only Harleigh's emotions are relayed here despite the novel's previous intermittent focalisation of Juliet; the absence of Juliet's objection indicates her willingness – expressing a desire to marry Harleigh would be improper, but the absence of a refusal is acceptable as consent. Though Juliet is not directly involved in the marriage negotiations, she willingly accepts her relatives' intervention and plans for her exchange from their protection (however brief) to Harleigh's. Despite Burgess's assertion that the confirmation of male authority is a symbolic rejection of commercial society, Juliet, as metaphoric currency, embraces the very thing she is alleged to be running from. Burgess suggests that Burney sees

commerce “as a diffuse force that penetrated into and destabilized the safest corners of private life” (87) yet the transaction inherent in the marriage arrangement with Harleigh, in which “his proposals were so munificent, that they were applauded rather than approved” (864-65), is commercial in nature. The two marriages that Juliet experiences are both monetarily based, though the Commissary’s desire for her £6000 is far more villainous than Harleigh’s seemingly less selfish motives; his independent fortune makes Juliet’s marriage portion an added bonus rather than a direct motivator in his desire to marry her, yet money is still a prime topic of conversation between the male relatives and Harleigh.

Inherent to the discussion of money and exchange is that of debt. Seen previously in *Humphry Clinker*, *Camilla*, *Castle Rackrent*, *Ennui*, and *The Absentee*, debt is the result of consuming outside of one’s means, more often than not through some form of conspicuous consumption. In *The Wanderer*, however, though Juliet consumes more than she has the ability to pay for, her consumption is out of necessity rather than vanity. One of the problems Smith has with the consumption of luxuries is the debt that seems to inevitably follow:

In a commercial country abounding with every sort of expensive luxury, the sovereign, in the same manner as almost all the great proprietors in his dominions, naturally spends a great part of his revenue in purchasing those luxuries. [...] His ordinary expense becomes equal to his ordinary revenue, and it is well if it does not frequently exceed it. The amassing of treasure can no longer be expected, and when extraordinary exigencies require extraordinary expenses, he must necessarily call upon his subjects for an extraordinary aid. (Book V 508)

Because the sovereign spends so much revenue on luxuries there is no surplus from which to cover emergency expenses, such as the costs of defence, which then cannot be met without taxing the populace. “The want of parsimony in time of peace imposes the necessity of contracting debt in time of war” (Book V 508-509) because the immediate necessity of expenditure in time of war “will not wait for the gradual and slow returns of the new taxes” (Book V 509), thus the government is forced to borrow. The problem of debt does not end there, however, because “[t]he same commercial state of society which [...] brings government in this manner into the necessity of borrowing, produces in the subjects both an ability and an inclination to lend” (Book V 509), and so the problem is perpetuated, all because the sovereign developed a taste for luxuries.

Smith sees the establishment and perpetuation of national debt as debilitating: “The progress of the enormous debts which at present oppress, and will in the long-run probably ruin, all the great nations of Europe, has been pretty uniform. Nations, like private men, have generally begun to borrow upon what may be called personal credit [...]” (Book V 511). Smith’s concern quickly becomes more cutting: “Like an improvident spendthrift, whose pressing occasions will not allow him to wait for the regular payment of his revenue, the state is in the constant practice of borrowing of its own factors and agents, and of paying interest for the use of its own money” (Book V 512-13). Hume, who had significant influence on Smith’s work, similarly wrote that: “It must, indeed, be one of these two events; either the nation must destroy public credit, or public credit will destroy the nation” (“Of Public Credit” 360-61). For Hume, according to Istvan Hont, “public debt was created by the commerce it would eventually destroy” (322), but rather than seeing commerce as the creator of debt, Hont suggests that “it is not commerce, but war (or the threat of war) that produces national debt, and [...] Hume’s essay [“Of Public Credit”] is in fact a meditation on the links between the fiscal necessities of national security and the social dislocations produced by debt finance” (322). Hont then suggests that “[t]he true antithesis to the danger of public debt was thus a durable peace, where public debt ceased to exist while commerce expanded” (322). Smith’s interpretation seems to take a different emphasis where, as mentioned, war-associated debt arises because the accumulation of wealth (i.e. saving) has ceased in favour of luxurious expenditure. Additionally for Smith, part of the issue of public debt goes back to the issue of productive and unproductive labour: “When the public expense is defrayed by funding, it is defrayed by the annual destruction of some capital which had before existed in the country; by the perversion of some portion of the annual produce which had before been destined for the maintenance of productive labour towards that of unproductive labour” (Book V 526). National debt inhibits the creation of wealth by redirecting public funds towards an unproductive debt rather than funnelling it towards something more economically useful.

Finn’s *Character of Credit* discusses the centrality of credit to eighteenth-century society. Finn argues that in the process of modernisation, brought on by increased consumption, the “foundations of England’s rise to economic eminence lie in the financial revolution” and in the creation of an “edifice of public debt and credit” (Finn 4-5). With the pervasiveness of credit came widespread debt, which was,

according to Finn, a fixture of ordinary life for many eighteenth-century people. Finn argues that many merchants gave credit based on appearances rather than personal knowledge of an individual's financial assets, which proved problematic when merchants were intentionally or innocently deceived by someone's appearance: "Perceptions of personal worth [...] registered the successful use of goods and services obtained on credit to construct creditworthy characters. Credit thus reflected character, but also constituted it" (Finn 18-19). To an extent, the intertwining of economic and social credit happens, then, in the shops through the medium of the merchant; the perceptions of the merchant, according to Finn, dictate whether an individual is fit to receive financial credit, which thus in turn opens the door for social credit.

Finn points out that Smith ignores credit transactions in *The Wealth of Nations*, favouring cash instead. More specifically,

Smith's magisterial *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) offered contemporaries a bold reformulation of the individual's role in fostering commercial growth, but it also laid the groundwork for economic theory's enduring misapprehension of personal credit and consumer relations by positing the cash nexus as an axiomatic feature of eighteenth-century English retail activity. In his schematic recapitulation of the evolution of money, Smith executed a rapid, unexamined leap from primordial economic transactions predicated on barter to modern market activity based on the immediate exchange of cash. (Finn 5-6)

In positing that "cash dealings reign supreme" Smith, according to Finn, simplifies and limits exchange negotiations (6). However, Smith's focus is less on the individual and more on the community, whereas Finn's study emphasises the individual experience of eighteenth-century credit systems. As the previous discussion here of Smith's perception of debt indicates, credit and debt on the national level as well as an acknowledgment of the existence and perpetuation of debt on the personal level was clearly part of Smith's treatise even if the nuances of an individually-focused credit economy are not explored in great depth.

Unlike Finn's interpretation, where social credit results from financial credit given by merchants and shopkeepers, the system flows the other way in *The Wanderer* where Juliet receives financial credit only because she has already received a degree of social acceptance. Credit and debt figure prominently in *The Wanderer*, both socially and materially; Juliet's lack of identity prevents her from establishing credit within the Brighthelmstone community, in terms of her ability to consume as well as her social credibility and acceptance. As Burgess points out:

Juliet needs a genteel appearance and connections in order to find employment, but can gain neither without first acquiring both. She must be able to consume luxuries in order to be able to consume essentials [...]. In order to enter the credit system, one must already have entered it: credit circulates without end in this novel, founded solely on successful representations. True worth (that is, Juliet's innate virtue, the unchallenged product [...] of her noble birth) get lost in the system of financial and social credit. (107)

According to Burgess, gaining social credit means gaining economic credit, as seen in the financial credit Juliet receives from Miss Matson and other shopkeepers despite her known poverty; this credit is given based solely on Miss Arbe's patronage of Juliet. Once Miss Arbe withdraws her patronage, that is, she rescinds Juliet's acceptable social credit rating, Juliet's creditors immediately demand payment because she has lost what little social credit she gained.

Because Juliet's clients – her harp students and those who commission piece-work – either never pay her or substantially delay payment, she goes into debt. Giles Arbe calls particular attention to the hypocrisy of her treatment of her creditors: though she laments lack of payment from her clients, she simultaneously fails to pay debts to her own creditors. Unlike Smith's portrayal of debt based on the conspicuous and excessive consumption of luxuries, Juliet's debt results from an honest attempt to set herself up in business; having no surplus from which to draw to cover the outlay of initial expenses necessary for her respectable establishment as a business-person, Juliet's debts accrue and only become worse through lack of payment. Rather than Smith's "improvident spendthrift," Juliet's debts are acquired through attempts at labour though the novel does not emphasise this point. The reasoning behind Juliet's debts matters less than the shame of having any debt at all, which, though not an overtly Smithian point because of the implied morality, is in keeping with Smith's dislike of debt.

On Juliet's refusal of Arbe's attempts to offer her monetary assistance so as to free herself from debt, he is dumbfounded. To his query as to why she will not accept his offer of help, Juliet replies, "“From the customs, Sir, of the world, I have been brought up to avoid all obligations with strangers”" (281). To which Arbe replies, "“How so? I don't at all see that. Have you not an obligation to that linen draper, and hosier, and I don't know who [...] if you take their things, and don't pay for them?”" (281). Shamed by the truth of this response, Juliet attempts to vindicate herself by promising to work harder so as to be able to pay them. Giles responds: "“Well then, [...] won't it be more honest to run in debt with an

old bachelor who has nobody but himself to take care of, than with a set of poor people who, perhaps, have got their houses full of children?’” (282). Given the sensitivity and “feeling” nature of Juliet, it is surprising that she has not realised the impact of her debts on other people; this lack of awareness can be attributed to her rank in that she would not normally be in such close contact with tradespeople, much less have them at her door demanding payment. The relatively anonymous nature of Juliet’s debts to tradespeople with whom she does not regularly interact is perhaps key to Juliet’s negligence, especially when contrasted to the personal and seemingly intimate nature of debts incurred to her acquaintance, particularly if those individuals are men.

Juliet is concerned throughout the novel to avoid incurring debts to men, though it is overwhelmingly only men who readily offer her monetary assistance. Although Juliet is grateful for the offered charity of Giles Arbe, as well as the charity she actually accepts from Harleigh, Lord Melbury, and Sir Jaspar Herrington, it also complicates her relationships with them and the community’s perceived understanding of those relationships. Being indebted to a man carries far different significance than being indebted to a woman and Juliet continually feels this disparity and is anxious about the way it will be perceived. Finn discusses the complex relationship between female debt and sexuality:

From the later seventeenth century, notions of femininity were essential to the literary representation of public credit institutions in the financial revolution. As private credit came to loom ever larger in the public mind, male and female literary commentators played relentlessly on the perceived nexus between sexual restraint and economic probity, conflating feminine chastity with virtuous credit dealings and equating lapses in female propriety with financial insolvency. (*Character of Credit* 12)

This conflation of lapsed female morality and debt illuminates why Juliet is so concerned about accumulating debt, and being in debt to men specifically. By being in debt, and especially in being publicly known as a debtor, Juliet not only invites public censure of her seemingly incontinent spending, but more importantly invites speculation on her sexual activities. Being in debt, as Finn points out, implies a lack of propriety; being in debt to Harleigh implies a potentially sexual relationship. Despite the chaste nature of their relationship, the implication of sexual indiscretion exists and with it, public speculation regarding Juliet’s character. It should be noted, however, that it is Harleigh who, unsolicited, gives her the money and insists on her keeping it despite several attempts to return it, and Harleigh who

perpetually pursues her despite her remonstrance that he should leave her alone. Though Juliet manages to keep her debt to Harleigh a secret, the “thunderstruck” reaction of Lord Melbury to seeing only Harleigh’s name on the packet filled with his banknotes, which Juliet has addressed to return to him, is an indication of the social consequences of discovery. Juliet is not unaware of the effect this has on Lord Melbury: “Shocked at the evidently unpleasant effect which this sight produced, and covered with blushes at the suspicions to which it might give rise, Juliet hastily exclaimed, ‘Oh my lord! I must no longer defer my explanation! any, every risk will be preferable to the loss of your esteem!’” (600). It is the potential for public disgrace and loss of social and personal credit with Lord Melbury that leads Juliet to disclose her most jealously guarded secret. This is the only time in the novel where, until her husband arrives to claim her, Juliet’s silence regarding her story and identity breaks, and all on account of the potential smear on her reputation and on Lord Melbury’s perception of it. The truth regarding the packet addressed to Harleigh and Juliet’s debt to him matters far less than public perception of the truth and it is this which concerns Juliet.

In addition to being indebted to Harleigh, Juliet has debts under Sir Jaspar and Lord Melbury as well. Sir Jaspar secretly provides Juliet with monetary assistance through paying Miss Matson a premium, which is necessary for her to work in the millinery shop (450), and while intended as an anonymous gift, Juliet regards the charity as an active debt. Lord Melbury secretly provides Juliet with a purse full of money (573), through which she is able to join Gabriella in London and help with the expenses of the haberdashery shop (623). Harleigh, as mentioned, surreptitiously provides Juliet with £100 which she tries to return several times to no avail. All three of these men, knowing Juliet’s scruples, try to aid her secretly, or at least remain undiscovered until it is too late for her to return the money.

In a highly embarrassing scene for Juliet, the surreptitious nature of her debts backfires when the assistance of all three men is made public within the hearing of Lord Melbury and Harleigh after a local gossip shares the information:

The sensations of Juliet underwent now another change, though shame was still predominant; her fears of exciting the expectations she sought to annul in Harleigh, were superseded by a terror yet more momentous, of giving ground for suspicion, not alone to himself, but to Lord Melbury, that, while fashioning a thousand difficulties, to accepting the assistance that was generously and delicately offered by themselves, she had suffered a third person [Sir Jaspar], that person, also, a

gentleman, to supply her pecuniary necessities. She breathed hard, and looked disordered, but could suggest nothing to say; while Harleigh and Lord Melbury stood as if transfixed by disturbed astonishment. (602-03)

Juliet's seemingly profligate acceptance of charity is shocking to Harleigh and Lord Melbury who know Juliet only as a woman of stringently modest behaviour. The disclosure makes it sound as though Juliet has been whoring around town, inviting the financial charity of a variety of men, and though all three men know Juliet to have rigorous scruples, they are still "transfixed by disturbed astonishment." In receiving the money of multiple men Juliet has breached the rules of propriety, and yet, though there are momentary doubts, she still ultimately manages to emerge with her virtue intact.

In the midst of Juliet's concerns, and the concerns of the men in her life, over her indebtedness to multiple men, the absence of any mention of Juliet's own wages, from being a personal companion to Mrs. Ireton or what she receives from Mrs. Hart, the mantua-maker, are rather conspicuous; it is only the money given to her by men that goes to any use. As a reinforcement of the patriarchal system that Juliet acquiesces to at the novel's denouement, the money given to her by her male admirers allows her to maintain the illusion of independence; through Lord Melbury's donation Juliet is able to escape Brighthelmstone and contribute to the maintenance of Gabriella's haberdashery shop; through Sir Jaspar's payment of the premium Juliet is able to work in Miss Matson's shop, and through his overly generous payment for ribbons Juliet is able to fund her flight from Soho into the country; and through Harleigh, Juliet is able to stave off the complete ruination of her social credit through paying off her creditors. Her independence is illusory, however, because she is still dependent on these hand-outs despite the wages she allegedly receives; the wages are less important than the social humiliation she undergoes to receive them and the potential scandal of being indebted to men. As Copeland points out, "[a]uthors like Austen, Burney, Edgeworth, [Charlotte] Smith, even the radical Wollstonecraft, are consistently resistant to turning their heroines into wage-earners, because, paradoxically, the heroine's successful employment would invite the hostility of the very society to which the heroine so earnestly aspires to belong" (162-63). The fact that these wages never seem to confirm the fact that Juliet is not meant to be a participant in a wage-earning position: her rank and breeding intend for her to perpetually remain under the care of others, and the money she receives from men who care about her is in reference to this fact.

Lynch discusses the significance of debt in *The Wanderer*, again relating effects of economics back to social ramifications:

Its heroine's associations with circulating goods and with money are signs of how the narrative sets her up as a catalyst for a sense of the social. What holds the book's numerous characters together and makes them a society is that each is this stranger's creditor: each lends her money, and she is what people have in lieu of a social contract to lend to the nation and so to themselves. Her narrative function is to be a perambulating personification of the national debt. (Lynch 201)

Smith refutes the idea "to lend to the nation and so to themselves," the idea that the money associated with national debt does not leave the confines of the originating country:

In the payment of the interest of the public debt, it has been said, it is the right hand which pays the left. The money does not go out of the country. It is only a part of the revenue of one set of the inhabitants which is transferred to another, and the nation is not a farthing the poorer. This apology is founded altogether in the sophistry of the mercantile system [...]. It supposes, besides, that the whole public debt is owing to the inhabitants of the country, which happens not to be true; the Dutch, as well as several other foreign nations, having a very considerable share in our public funds. But though the whole debt were owing to the inhabitants of the country, it would not upon that account be less pernicious. (Book V 528)

Lynch discusses "the market as a place of social exchange" (205); if Juliet personifies national debt, the community of Brighthelmstone then becomes a microcosm of the nation where their lending, or "funding," in Smith's terms, makes Juliet a stand-in for the nation at large. In this sense Juliet becomes, as Doody and Epstein describe her, "a nameless Everywoman"³⁸ (xv and 178, respectively).

Lynch sees Juliet as a personification of the national debt, yet I would argue that she embodies more than simply one aspect of commercial society: she acts as a physical representation of Smith's principle of free trade. Despite the lack of monetary success Juliet experiences through her various means of employment, she is completely unfettered in her ability to labour and produce; though Juliet constrains herself through her own sense of propriety, no physical obstacle or regulatory principle stands in the way of her pursuit. Through Juliet's experience as both producer and consumer, in labouring productively and unproductively in the Smithian sense, and in her experience of the foibles of a credit economy, she is an embodiment of Smithian political economy. As this chapter has shown, Burney utilises Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as a means of highlighting areas of ambivalence and conflict in his economic treatise; in questioning and challenging elements of Smith's theory Burney subtly draws attention to the social

³⁸ Johnson questions this, arguing that because the novel sets Juliet up as someone extraordinary, there is no generalising possible – she cannot be an everywoman because she is portrayed as too unique (173).

ramifications of commercial society, particularly the treatment of those who actively engage with it and the consequences of that engagement. Burney's attention to Smith's ambivalence paves the way for further complications and challenges to Smith presented by Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*; where Burney illuminates the intricacies and ambivalences within specific topics of Smith's political economic system, Scott calls into question some of the larger issues inherent to Smith. Building on the political and economic issues of national development raised in *Edgeworth*, Scott further sophisticates the historical novel in his incorporation of social, moral, economic, and political complications present in the theme of consumption and his utilisation of Smith.

Chapter Six: Stadal History and the Question of Commercial Society in *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*

In *The Wealth of Nations* Smith frames his discussion of political economy using the Enlightenment theory of stadial history, explaining the progression of civilisation in terms of economic development from hunter-gatherer to commercial society and the various needs and economic and social implications of each progressive stage. This chapter will discuss commerce and consumption as factors of political economy and stadial history as seen in Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* and *Rob Roy*, particularly the ways in which representations of consumption in each novel correspond with the respective adherence to or complication of civilisations' historical progression.³⁹

Smith defines societies in terms of how they create the means to their material survival be it through livestock, land, or money; the end-point for Smith is commercial society and, as mentioned in other chapters, its ability to create a more peaceful, prosperous, and stable society. In *Waverley* Scott clearly employs the Enlightenment theory of stadial history - the further away Edward travels from London the more primitive are the people, culture, and economy that he encounters. The ultimate example of "primitive" pre-commercial society is found in the Highlands of Scotland and the clan of Fergus MacIvor. Though the vast majority of the action in *Waverley* takes place in Scotland, England is portrayed as the far more civilised and culturally superior nation. On Edward's return to the south the narrator remarks, "He then, for the first time since leaving Edinburgh, began to experience that pleasure which almost all feel who return to a verdant, populous, and highly-cultivated country, from scenes of waste desolation, or of solitary and melancholy grandeur" (*Waverley* 329).

The financial world in *Waverley* is left largely unexplored and the cultural effects of economic advancement are taken for granted rather than explicitly explained. Unlike the equivocal treatment of politics and economics found in Edgeworth's utilisation of Smith in her Irish novels, Scott foregrounds

³⁹ As Juliet Shields points out in *Sentimental Literature and Anglo-Scottish Identity*, global exploration came to discredit stadial theory, "suggesting to Britons that all savage and all civilized peoples might not necessarily share similar characteristics, and that all societies might not progress uniformly through discrete stages from tribal origins to commercial telos" (36). This chapter, however, does not question the historical or sociological accuracy of stadial theory, but focuses rather on how these two novels reflect eighteenth-century acceptance of it.

politics in *Waverley*; it is political machinations rather than economic disparity which drive the novel's plot forward. That Edward's father, Richard Waverley, is an MP, and one so devoted to his career and political advancement that he essentially abandons his son to his brother's care, underlines the importance of the political within the novel. Unlike Edgeworth's *Ennui* or *The Absentee*, *Waverley* is not about the economic advancement of a less "civilised" nation. Rather, it accepts the economic and social disparities between Scotland and England as background historical fact as it delves into the political conflict between the two.

After Edward leaves the commercial world of London and heads north to join his regiment in Scotland, he encounters the village of Tully-Veolan outside the estate of his uncle's friend, Baron Bradwardine. Situated just below the Highland line, the village "seemed miserable in the extreme, especially to an eye accustomed to the smiling neatness of English cottages" (32). The narrator describes the primitivity of the village's inhabitants – their idleness, poverty, and dirtiness: "The whole scene was depressing, for it argued, at the first glance, at least a stagnation of industry, and perhaps of intellect. Even curiosity, the busiest passion of the idle, seemed of a listless cast in the village of Tully-Veolan: the curs [...] alone shewed any part of its activity; with the villagers it was passive" (33). Having given this damning depiction of the village, however, the narrator qualifies it by noting: "It seemed, upon the whole, as if poverty, and indolence, its too frequent companion, were combining to depress the natural genius and acquired information of a hardy, intelligent, and reflecting peasantry" (33). The narrator's use of politico-economic terms jars slightly with what the reader knows of Edward's character and his intellectual leanings and, despite the novel's avoidance of explicit economic discussion, calls attention to the narrator's awareness of economic issues. Though it is doubtful that Edward fully appreciates the "natural genius" of the village being "depressed" by lack of economic development, it is clear that the narrator does. The narrator blurs lines between what Edward knows and what he does not, interjecting to explain what Edward sees. The village is distinguished by its poverty, consequent from its lack of industry and seemingly a lack of motivation to utilise their natural genius, which leads the reader to ask, why? As laird of the neighbouring estate, how much is the Baron complicit in allowing the village to remain in this state? The Baron is not an improving landlord and, kindly and comical though he is, his concern for the well-

being of the villagers nearby is minimal at best, which brings to mind the lack of involvement the Clonbronzys display throughout most of *The Absentee*. The questions that arise regarding the collective lack of industry in the people are never addressed and the village never revisited in any detail, so despite the happy ending for Edward and Rose and the restoration of the Baron's estate after the rebellion, the village remains unimproved, impoverished, and the people seemingly forgotten. In this regard the novel offers a subtle kind of moral judgment of the Baron and Edward. Like Edgeworth's condemnation of unimproving absentee landlords, *Waverley* offers a subtle critique of those landlords who are present but do not improve the lives of their tenants. Edward forgets the village almost as soon as he has passed through it: "The solitude and repose of the whole scene [on entering the estate] seemed almost monastic, and Waverley, [...] so much pleased with the placid ideas of rest and seclusion excited by this confined and quiet scene, that he forgot the misery and dirt of the hamlet he had left behind him" (35). Because economics is not a focus of the novel, and is not of any lasting concern to Edward, the village and its poverty are left behind as the plot moves on; the village comes to solely serve as an example of the undeveloped state of Scotland's peasantry relative to those of England, and of the moral failing of the Baron as landlord.

Just outside the village Edward finds Bradwardine's estate which is described at length as ancient and venerable. Though the mansion is in good repair and well-tended to, it is also conspicuously described as being from a more ancient past: "It had been built at a period when castles were no longer necessary, and when the Scottish architects had not yet acquired the art of designing a domestic residence" (35). The house was designed to withstand and repel "any roving band of gipsies, or resist a predatory visit from the caterans of the neighbouring Highlands" (35), which ultimately proves ineffective when the estate is sacked by Hanoverian troops; the estate is defensible against archaic offences but not contemporary ones. While the garden is well-tended and fruitful (and provides shelter to Bradwardine after the rebellion), the land on his estate is described as "half-cultivated" (41), implying a kind of wildness and untamed nature. The Baron is in the midst of felling a portion of oak timber when Edward arrives (41). Reminiscent of the timber cut down on the family estate to pay for the extravagances of Lady Clonbrony in *The Absentee*, the felling of his trees marks Bradwardine and his estate as unproductive.

Though not nearly as unproductive and useless as the Baynard estate in *Humphry Clinker*, Bradwardine's estate is also not as productive as it has the potential to be as he makes money through selling his assets rather than cultivating more. Though the timber is a renewable asset, its sale is also symbolically destructive. His estate represents the agrarian phase in the stadial progression – isolated from centres of commerce, on the border of the Highlands and “about a bow-shot” (34) from the primitive and impoverished village, the Bradwardine estate, at the beginning of the novel, is, as Saree Makdisi points out, seemingly threatened on all sides from tipping into a primitive state. Makdisi argues that the threat of primitivity is lost through the intervention of Colonel Talbot, whose restoration of the estate “purifies” it from all Jacobitical and threateningly primitive associations (Makdisi 169-70). The fact of Talbot's Englishness is not enough, however, to “purify” the restoration of the estate's artifacts and their symbolism. Talbot himself seems to ensure this and goes to great lengths to see that the estate looks exactly as it did before it was sacked, including the restoration of the ancient bear statues, thus still underlining its connection to the feudal past. The large portrait of Fergus and Edward in Highland dress, accompanied by the arms Edward bore in the rebellion, which make a prominent display in one of the rooms, makes the Baron's continuing loyalty clear. The restoration of Bradwardine's cup, the “Blessed Bear of Bradwardine” causes the narrator to “question if the recovery of his estate afforded him more rapture” (338); the Baron is tied to the past through his reverence for family relics and the estate itself, which is an emblem of the feudal past. He embraces and celebrates that connection whole-heartedly, so while the estate may have the appearance of being purified in passing through English Hanoverian hands and the Baron chastened for his Jacobitical alliance through his loss of title, the estate remains much the same as it did prior to the rebellion, in all its “primitive” glory, as do the Baron's loyalties.

Edward's first evening at Tully-Veolan results in an uncharacteristic experience of intemperance. The narrator makes a point of noting how much Edward dislikes drinking in excess: “[...] Waverley, with some difficulty, obtained the privilege of sometimes neglecting his glass” (45); “Waverley, with horror and alarm, beheld the [...] [bear goblet] making his rounds [...]” (46); “Waverley was unaccustomed to the use of wine, excepting with great temperance” (50). He feels obligated to join in the carouse of Baron Bradwardine and his friends out of adherence to polite behaviour, having been informed that to “demur to

such an overture would be construed into a high misdemeanour against the [...] regulations of genial computation" (47). Not wanting to offend his hosts, he drinks too much and nearly enters into a physical altercation after being insulted by Balmawhapple, though the Baron jumps in before Edward can defend his own honour by challenging Balmawhapple himself (49-50). The Baron makes a point of noting that the wine he invites Edward to drink is wine he personally sent back to Scotland from Bordeaux in 1713, when he was potentially aiding in the plotting of the 1715 rebellion. The bear flagon, out of which Edward, the Baron, and his friends drink to excess, while a symbol of Bradwardine's house, comes to synecdochally stand for drunkenness through the rest of the novel. "Beware the bear," the family motto, rather than retaining its martial resonance, comes to refer to the bear flagon specifically and serves as a tongue-in-cheek warning of the dangers of excessive consumption. Fergus later obliquely references the bear cup as Edward leaves his feast: "Although I cannot stint my clan in the usual current of their festivity, yet I neither am addicted myself to exceed in its amount, nor do I," added he, smiling, 'keep a Bear to devour the intellects of such as can make good use of them'" (99). The cup, like the house itself, is an ancient relic of great emotional importance to Bradwardine, and serves to tie him to the feudal past rather than the commercial present.

This carouse, instigated by Bradwardine, though not of a particularly refined cast, stands in contrast to the feast given by Fergus MacIvor in the Highlands, which is distinctly more primitive in its structure, attendance, and content but is also politically motivated, compared to Bradwardine's simple desire to be an hospitable host; the conflict that arises between Waverley and Balmawhapple is, however, political in nature, so while the aim of the gathering is not politically motivated it does have political resonance. The narrator describes the feast given by Fergus: "The apparatus for dinner was simple, even to rudeness, and the company numerous, even to crowding" (96). Edward finds himself nearly overwhelmed by the noise and confusion, which the narrator describes as a "Babel of noises" (97) for which Fergus apologises, "plead[ing] the necessity of his situation, on which unlimited hospitality was imposed as a paramount duty" (97). The feast given by Fergus reiterates and reinforces a feudal hierarchy, where the laird and his privileged guests, including Edward, eat and drink the best quality and most specially-prepared dishes while those physically further down the table and further away from the

chief have significantly simpler fare in keeping with their lower status (96). Fergus explains (complains) to Edward that his people depend on and expect his support, and though he seems to resent the idleness of his clan, he explains it as part of their nature, saying “everything will keep after its kind, whether it be a hawk or a Highlander” (97). This kind of cultural essentialism reiterates the perceived animalistic primitivism of Highland society and would be problematic on that point alone, but the fact that it comes from the clan’s chief makes it all the more disturbing in that he limits his own people and his entire race. The narrator remarks on how the feast participants are seemingly content with the lot they are given, making a show of calling for the dishes particularly allotted to their station; they use consumption as a means of acting out rank: “Every one present understood that his taste was to be formed according to the rank which he held at table; and consequently the tacksmen and their dependants always professed the wine was too cold for their stomachs, and called, apparently out of choice, for the liquor which was assigned to them from economy” (96). Whether or not the people actually are content, their complicity in the feudal hierarchy reinforces and reiterates their primitivity.

In *Scotland, Britain, Empire: Writing the Highlands, 1760-1860* Kenneth McNeil points out that the feast in *Waverley* points to Fergus’s greatest failing as a chieftain in that, “[d]evoted to expanding his own political power alone, he cares little for the members of his clan” (97), as can also be seen through his racial essentialising and easy dismissal of the day-to-day lives of his people. The narrator describes Fergus: “[...] while few men were more attached to ideas of chieftainship and feudal power, he was, for that very reason, cautious of exhibiting external marks of dignity, unless at the time and in the manner when they were most likely to produce an imposing effect” (89). And again:

His own patriarchal power he strengthened at every expence which his fortune would permit, and indeed stretched his means to the uttermost to maintain the rude and plentiful hospitality, which was the most valued attribute of a chieftain. For the same reason, he crowded his estate with a tenantry, hardy indeed, and fit for the purposes of war, but greatly outnumbering what the soil was calculated to maintain. (92)

In order to maintain not only the rules of hospitality and the expectation of providing for his clansmen, Fergus maintains his army in keeping with pre-commercial landowning civic humanist tradition: he assures himself of a loyal army by consistently providing for them. However, he does so to the detriment of his own finances and to the land itself. This overuse of the land implies that his practices are not

sustainable over the long-term, and is perhaps playing a riskier short-term game with the hopes of a more significant payout. Like the land, he views his clan as an expendable asset, as means to acquiring greater political and social power.

Given their polite manners and Continental education, there is some question as to the degree to which Fergus and Flora fit in with the primitive category that their clan, and all of the Highlands, occupy within *Waverley*. Their unflinching support for the Stuarts and their support of and participation with the Jacobites demonstrates an adherence to tradition and clan culture that could be interpreted as “primitive” in that they cling to a feudal way of life that has become outmoded to the way Britain continues to progress commercially and economically. Makdisi notes:

Indeed, his [Fergus’s] education has not changed his essential quality as a Highland *laird*, nor, in the novel’s terms, could it have. Instead, for the most part it merely adds a gloss, a fine veneer that at first makes Fergus more ‘palatable’ as a character, although it gradually and subtly undermines his position by reinforcing the notion that no amount of Continental education and manners could improve upon his stubbornly and immutably Highland mentality and physiognomy. (163)

Fergus, according to Makdisi, is a product of his ancestry rather than his upbringing; through his actions Fergus proves himself to be more primitive than modern – he risks everything to put Charles Stuart on the throne and acquire a title for himself, which is a distinctly feudal ambition in an age of increasing commercialism, expanding empire, and growing industrialism. However, when considering the sophistication of Fergus’s political manipulations and the way in which he utilises the primitive in order to gain politically, he appears more modern than primitive. In arguing that Fergus is defined by an “essential quality” of primitivity, that nature trumps nurture, Makdisi limits Fergus in the same way Fergus limits his own clansmen. Despite the fact of their birth and heritage as Highlanders, Fergus and Flora are outsiders; they have an awareness of the aesthetic effect of the Highlands not immediately accessible to those on the inside. Though Fergus backs the Stuarts and participates in the rebellion with the idea of returning the family to the throne, he ultimately works for his own advancement and profit rather than solely from feelings of loyalty or duty. When viewed from this perspective the MacIvors are more modern than primitive, yet, because they simultaneously participate in and symbolise the instability of feudal political

society in their insurrection against the sovereign, they are not allowed to participate in the novel's happy ending.

As seen through Fergus and throughout *Waverley*, Scott consistently relegates Jacobitism to Scotland's past. Juliet Shields notes that "[...] Scotland's feudal past is, for Scott, indelibly associated with Jacobitism" (146); *Waverley* shows the eradication of the Jacobites as part of Scotland's transition from feudalism to modernity and ultimately to the British union symbolised in the marriage of Edward and Rose (Shields 139). Ian Duncan similarly notes that in *Waverley* "[...] Scott had identified the failure of the Jacobite rising with the historical end of clan society, ceremonially marked by the state trial and execution of the chieftain Fergus Mac-Ivor" (99). The clan and the Jacobites are inextricably linked in *Waverley* through Fergus, and with the death of Fergus comes not only, as Duncan points out, the end of clan society but the end of Jacobitism. The Jacobite movement flourishes on the promise of returning to the past through restoring the Stuarts, relying on the Highland clans to bring that promise to fruition. As is evident in *Waverley*, the Jacobites rely on feudal hierarchical systems of power, and thus the movement cannot feasibly flourish in a commercial society; it does not accommodate an adaptation to Britain's evolving political economy, but insists on returning to past models of society. Because of Scotland's "primitive" association, Scott connects Jacobitism with Scotland and in an ahistorical move implicitly connects the Highlands and Highlanders with Jacobitism in *Waverley*.

In *Waverley*, the hero's—and the reader's—enthralled discovery of Highland clan society precipitates its extinction, its reinscription from a remote place to the remote time of a vanishing pre-modernity. The contemplation of this lost world converts any discontent we might feel about the imperial violence of modern state formation into a luxurious, aestheticized melancholy. (Duncan 83)

Rather than focusing on the devastating repercussions of the rebellion to the Highlands, the fact that the Highlanders are made part of the past through their Jacobitical association makes their near cultural extinction less reprehensible. Duncan's use of the word "luxurious" is interesting in this context – it implies commercial culture's commodification, and thus objectification, of Highland culture. The extinction of clan society allows for an indulgence in emotion; in being packaged as part of a temporal as well as geographical "vanishing pre-modernity," "Highlandness" becomes a commodity where atrocities are traded for the "luxurious" indulgence of aesthetic feeling.

Some critics have argued that the Waverley novels after *Waverley* have been mistakenly interpreted as mere variations of the first (Duncan 83-84, McNeil 52). There are, many have noted, many similarities between *Waverley* and subsequent novels. Alexander Welsh discusses various formulaic elements of the Waverley Novels in *The Hero of the Waverley Novels*, particularly focusing on the passivity of the heroes; A.O.J. Cockshut sees *Rob Roy* as building on themes introduced in *Waverley*; Shields generalises Scott's historical novels as depicting Highland society's demise as an inevitable effect "of southern Britain's commercial prosperity and imperial expansion" (114); Duncan notes that Trumpener and Makdisi "read the Waverley novels as the instrument of an imperialist and modernizing ideology of 'official nationalism,' devoted to the assimilation of political-economic and cultural differences through the logic of internal colonialism" (82-83). *Rob Roy*, the subject of the remainder of this chapter, has often been dismissed as just another Waverley novel. Like Edward, Frank Osbaldistone leaves southern England to travel north to Scotland, encounters Highlanders, has some adventures involving both Highlanders and Jacobites, meets a girl, gets married, and ends up on the family estate. Like Edward, Frank has a troubled relationship with his father and an ambiguous masculinity. But unlike *Waverley*, *Rob Roy* discusses the economic implications of political action;⁴⁰ where *Waverley* ignores the financial sector in favour of a more focused look at politics, *Rob Roy* looks at the way the two are intertwined, through which Scott makes the commercial/feudal opposition explicit.

Duncan argues that *Waverley* should not stand for Scott's work as a whole (83). "The Waverley novels after *Waverley* unfold an altogether more challenging relation between novelistic representation and the historical geography of modernization than is admitted [...], one which makes problematic the ideological oppositions Scott's novels are meant to serve" (Duncan 84). Duncan uses *Rob Roy* to elucidate these more complicated oppositions, discussing how the novel does not fully adhere to the Enlightenment stadial history schema as *Waverley* does. *Rob Roy* complicates the expected historical progression in failing to match Frank's journey north with the expected regression from commercial centre

⁴⁰ Many critics have looked at the economic focus of *Rob Roy*: Duncan's "Primitive Inventions," David Brown's *Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination*, Cockshut's *The Achievement of Walter Scott*, Andrew Lincoln's "Scott and Empire: The Case of *Rob Roy*," and Lawrence Poston's "The Commercial Motif of the Waverley Novels."

to savage barbarism; the novel does this, according to Duncan, through representing the eponymous hero as representative of commercial man and not the expected savage clansman. Duncan argues that, unlike in *Waverley*, Scott separates Jacobitism from Highland culture in *Rob Roy*, thus preventing both of these from synecdochally standing for Scotland as a whole, which allows for a different discursive category: the primitive (88), which is part of the present as well as the past (Duncan 97). For Duncan, “*Rob Roy* adumbrates the primitive as a category invented by modern culture as a figure of itself – a quality or agency intrinsic to the operations of modernity, but rendered as alien to it, moving outside the domestic ideological field of civil society” (88-89); *Rob Roy* dramatises an internal splitting of the modern community. This is further explained through colonialism and imperial ideology. African “savagery” for example is made part of the normative present because the colonising force is economically dependent on the products of colonial (slave) labour (Duncan 91-92). In *Rob Roy* the “savage” and the commercial are embodied within the character of Rob Roy, which is emblematic of the overarching teleological uncertainty Duncan sees in Scotland as a whole within the novel: “Scotland is not represented as a unified territorial and cultural entity, a nation, since it is split between the very different worlds of Glasgow and the Highlands; nor, crucially is it situated as provincial or as past in relation to metropolitan England” (94). For Duncan, feudalism and Jacobitism, rather than embodied in Scotland’s present, “constitute the British nation’s socio-economic and political past” (97), as represented by the Northumberland Osbaldistones. The Highlanders, however, “evoke a different order of ancestral relationship to modernity: the order of the primitive” (Duncan 97). The primitive, rather than signaling a pre-feudal society, “signifies an origin still structurally present within modernity – disavowed but persistent – rather than a superseded developmental form” (Duncan 97).

Duncan’s analysis of *Rob Roy*’s complicated stadial history is problematic in that it relegates the Northumberland Osbaldistones to their feudal category and abandons them there without further attention. As Robert Irvine points out in *Enlightenment and Romance*, “Duncan incorporates Osbaldistone Hall into the stadial history of the Scottish Enlightenment by making it stand for the missing third term between savagery and commerce missing from Frank’s experience in Scotland: the feudal organisation of an agrarian society” (163). Duncan dismisses Osbaldistone Hall and Sir Hildebrand as inherently following

the stadial history schema rather than subverting it, arguing that “[t]he narrative’s move north into Scotland, however, undoes the teleological certainty – the conviction of pastness – encoded in the Northumberland chapters, and with it the ordering of regional cultural differences along a linear chronology” (94). For Duncan, *Rob Roy*’s subversion of the expected schema happens only after Frank and Jarvie cross the border into Scotland, ignoring further complications that occur prior to this boundary crossing.

What I would like to argue is that Duncan is mistaken in so easily reconciling Osbaldistone Hall to the pre-commercial feudal past; rather than merely the setting of “rustic feudalism” (Duncan 94), Osbaldistone Hall is also a site of commerce and of consumption – it is not simply an historical experience but a commercial one as well. The unrefined behaviour of the Osbaldistones is undisputed as is their rusticity, which is evidenced in their manners, appearance, and overall intelligence, but classifying them within the pre-commercial category ignores the excessive consumption the family engages in throughout the Northumberland chapters. Though their behaviour and manners may be reminiscent of a feudal past, their consumption metonymically figures in the commercial present.

It is not only at Osbaldistone Hall and in the Highlands that the stadial progression becomes complicated, however; this also occurs within the commercial stage, through the moral ambiguity of the representatives of commercial society. Duncan acknowledges “[...] that in *Rob Roy* the juxtaposition of savage and commercial stages obliterates their relation as each other’s past and future, instead of clarifying it. Despite their official opposition, savagery and commerce sustain rather than cancel out one another, constituting the uncertain, cryptic, and ‘astonishing’ field of the present” (95). Duncan argues that the “savage” and commercial stages exist simultaneously, and in fact sustain one another. What I take issue with is not the issue of temporality but rather the moral implications seemingly inherent in the commercial world that Scott flags up as problematic; within the Enlightenment schema, commercial society is the supposed pinnacle of civilisation yet the morality or ethical practice of this society is at times abhorrent. Through the character of Frank’s father and his firm, Osbaldistone & Tresham, Scott paints the commercial world as avaricious and unsympathetic; the business dealings of Bailie Nicol Jarvie are similarly suspect, though not portrayed in quite such a dubious light. Though *Rob Roy* intentionally

creates an opposition between feudal and commercial societies, it simultaneously questions the moral value of the supposed pinnacle of civilised society. It is not merely that the economic stadial progression becomes complicated in *Rob Roy*, it becomes morally and socially questionable.

Osbaldistone Hall initially seems, as Duncan points out, a scene of “rustic feudalism” (94). Indeed, Frank first encounters his family members in the midst of a fox hunt (101). The overall chaotic and unrefined nature of Osbaldistone Hall, coupled with the oafishness of Frank’s cousins, would make it easy to qualify the family as feudal and pre-commercial and leave them there. Removed from centres of commerce, the novel does not show the inhabitants of Osbaldistone Hall directly engaging in commercial acts. It does show Sir Hildebrand and his sons, excluding Rashleigh, to be poorly behaved and rustic in their intellectual and social skills; their sole occupations centre on sport and feasting. The estate is clearly in disarray, as Frank notes the shabby state of his uncle’s once “richly laced” hunting suit, “whose splendour had been tarnished” (109), and his general state of rusticity despite “retain[ing] much of the exterior of a gentleman” (109). Sir Hildebrand’s sons, unlike foppish male characters of other novels,⁴¹ do not care for fashion, society, or the latest culinary trends from France. Their concerns and desires are far more visceral than intellectual. Their “[...] only pretence to accomplishment was their dexterity in field sports, for which alone they lived” (110). They generally live large – they eat a lot, drink a lot, ride hard, and physically are large men: “The sons were, indeed, heavy unadorned blocks as the eye would desire to look upon. Tall, stout, and comely, all and each of the five eldest seemed to want alike the Promethean fire of intellect, and the exterior grace and manner which, in the polished world, sometimes supply mental deficiency” (110). Diana refers to her cousins as “Ourang-Outangs” (152) – loveable but stupid and easily categorised, a tactic that denies them complexity and depth and makes a primitive qualification more conveniently come by.

The brothers (apart from Rashleigh) are not noted for their intelligence, but rather, like each of Edgeworth’s Rackrent heirs, each brother is labeled with a particular vice (including Rashleigh), several of which are related to commercial exchange. In Diana’s words, “[...] they form a happy compound of sot, gamekeeper, bully, horsejockey, and fool [...]” (111). All of the cousins come to be defined by their vices

⁴¹ Clermont Lynmere and Sir Sedley Clarendel in *Camilla*, and Sir Robert Floyer in *Cecilia* to name a few.

or shortcomings because they are taken to the extreme; they possess an excess of a particular trait and so become defined by it both in life and death. These initial exterior impressions present a case for leaving Osbaldistone Hall in its feudal pre-commercial category, yet it is, however, only an initial external impression.

As mentioned previously, for Duncan feudalism and Jacobitism “constitute the British nation’s socio-economic and political past” (Duncan 97); in contrast to *Waverley*, *Rob Roy* separates Highlanders and the Highlands from Jacobitism, thus allowing the Highlands to become part of Scotland’s present economic advancement and so relegating Jacobitism to its feudal past. As such, according to Duncan, the Northumberland Osbaldistones, who are Jacobite supporters and participants in the rebellion, are also relegated to the past; the fact that they are all killed off at the novel’s end and the entire branch of the family dies out seems to support this – Jacobitism is part of a past that is no longer part of Scotland’s present and does not contribute to its economic future. Cockshut argues that the Osbaldistone sons disappear because their way of life is outmoded; they have remained in the past without properly honouring and living up to the old system (160), or creating a sufficient substitute. Duncan restates this to a degree, focusing particularly on how the Osbaldistones’ feudal Jacobitism relegates them to the past:

...[T]he novel’s settings represent not just geographically distinct spaces but anthropologically distinct temporal stages, very much according to the Scottish Enlightenment model of philosophical history. We might expect this arrangement of settings to map the kind of historicist scheme exemplified in *The Wealth of Nations*, so that clan society, feudalism, and commerce will describe a teleological progression in which the obsolescence of one stage – its pastness – guarantees the succession of the next. The Northumberland chapters seem to bear this out, their alternating modes of satire (mocking provincial backwardness) and Gothic (evoking fatality and ghostliness) firmly consigning the feudal, Roman Catholic, and Royalist culture of Jacobitism to the superseded past. (Duncan 94)

According to these critics, the Jacobitical Osbaldistones are relegated to the past through their feudal lifestyle and pre-commerciality; as such they fit in with Smith’s stadial schema.

Additionally, the way in which Frank’s relatives consume is feudal, similar in its excess to the feasting of Baron Bradwardine. On Frank’s first evening in his uncle’s house, he is introduced to the appetites of his cousins and uncle:

The bumper being pledged by me, as a dutiful nephew, and some other general intercourse of the table having taken place, the continued and business-like clang of knives and forks, and the devotion of cousin Thorncliff on my right hand, and cousin Dickon, who sate on Miss Vernon’s

left, to the huge quantities of meat with which they heaped their plates, made them serve as two occasional partitions, separating us from the rest of the company, and leaving us to our *tête-à-tête*. (113)

His cousins' dedication to eating and drinking, and privileging these activities over those of conversation and polite interaction, becomes apparent as does their general lack of refinement; they are gentlemen by birth but not in breeding. When Frank first arrives in Northumberland, he notes that, though his uncle is still considered "a man of large property," he employs it "in maintaining the prodigal hospitality of a northern squire of the period, which he deemed essential to his family dignity" (100). On first appearance, Sir Hildebrand seems to have a good deal in common with Baron Bradwardine, as well as Squire Western in the prodigality, rudeness, and excess in which he engages. The Osbaldistones' feasting differs from that of Baron Bradwardine, however, or from that of Fergus in that there is no tradition grounding them to the past, apart from the vague idea that it asserts family dignity. The Osbaldistones are hungry men who consume in excess, but there is no bear flagon pressuring them to drink or justifying the quantity they consume, and no hierarchical structure dictating what foods they can eat based on rank – there is a distinct absence of explicit tradition in the Hall. In short, consumption at Osbaldistone Hall serves no political purpose in the society described by the novel. Where the feasting of Bradwardine and Fergus in particular contribute to political machinations and delineate social expectations, the feasting of the Osbaldistones is for themselves alone; like Tom's sexual consumption in *Tom Jones* which, bereft of any political satire or courtly commentary becomes "vulgar" in its individuated bodiliness, the Osbaldistones' consumption becomes similarly void of ulterior motive. This is not to say, however, that their feasting has no political *meaning* in the story the novel tells about their society, but the Osbaldistones do not *intend* it to serve a political function.

Frank clearly dislikes the excess in which his relatives regularly indulge. After dinner on his first evening on the estate Frank witnesses his relatives' excessive consumption of alcohol:

My foreign education had given me a distaste to intemperance, then and yet too common a vice among my countrymen. The conversation which seasoned such orgies was as little to my taste, and, if anything could render it more disgusting, it was the relationship of the company. I therefore seized a lucky opportunity, and made my escape through a side-door, leading I knew not whither, rather than endure any longer the sight of father and sons practising the same degrading intemperance, and holding the same coarse and disgusting conversation. I was pursued, of course, as I had expected [...] as a deserter from the shrine of Bacchus. (116)

Frank finds the intemperance of his cousins repellent, but what disturbs him more is that his uncle joins his sons in their degrading behaviour. Sir Hildebrand, as previously noted, still maintains a gentlemanly appearance, despite the decaying signs of his former glory; this carouse with his sons, however, dispels the idea that Sir Hildebrand is a proper leader of the family, thus further degrading the tarnished appearance of gentility. As head of the house, and perhaps more significantly, as the holder of an inherited noble title, Sir Hildebrand fails to distinguish himself as such - he fails to separate himself from the irresponsible and indulgent behaviour of his sons. His seeming inability, or lack of concern, in controlling their behaviour and the ramifications it could have on their future prospects, whether personal, social, or political, contributes to the family's collective downfall.

Through the deaths of the Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistones, consumption as a moral issue is rendered obsolete. Contrasted with the excesses of Mrs. Baynard in *Humphry Clinker*, that of the Harrels in Burney's *Cecilia*, or that of both Glenthorn families in *Ennui*, the Osbaldistones' excess is not judged from a moral standpoint – they are never represented as bad people, despite the antagonism between Frank and his cousins. After his night of drunken bad behaviour Frank notes that “[i]ll-nature was not the fault of my cousins in general; they saw I was vexed and hurt at the recollections of the preceding evening, and endeavoured, with clumsy kindness, to remove the painful impression they had made on me” (175); however, Frank later admits that he “had no reason to regard [his cousins] with affection” (433) after their deaths. Regardless of whether or not Frank *likes* his cousins, they are not represented as villains (apart from Rashleigh) as some of the excessive consumers of other novels are: Mr. Harrel in *Cecilia*, who, with his various schemes to appropriate or extort money out of Cecilia in order to pay his own debts, becomes villainous in his attempts to sell Cecilia off through marriage so he can gain easier access to her money; Mrs. Baynard is represented as the villain in the Baynard marriage because of her consumption habits and the effects it has on her husband and his estate; Camilla perceives herself as a villain and bringer of ruin on her family because of her debts while her brother and cousin are perceived as the true villains by the reader because of the effects their debts have on the family. The morality of the Osbaldistones is never an issue within the novel, however much Frank disdains their habits and behaviour, because their

consumption only affects their immediate family rather than the larger community. Their consumption is not judged through a moral lens or as a reflection on their moral character – they are never portrayed as bad people because of their excesses, but as unrefined, undisciplined, and perhaps a bit childish.

Sir Hildebrand's behaviour and failure to distinguish himself as a figure of authority is symptomatic of the chaotic situation generally found on the Osbaldistone estate, and it is for this negligence that he is judged rather than for his excessive consumption. The chaos Frank finds himself plunged into on his arrival is one instance of this:

At length, while the dinner was, after various efforts, in the act of being arranged upon the board, 'the clamour much of men and dogs,' the cracking of whips, calculated for the intimidation of the latter, voices rose loud and high, steps which [...] announced the arrival of those for whose benefit the preparations were made. The hubbub among the servants rather increased than diminished as this crisis approached [...]. (107-8)

The tumultuousness of his first dining experience at Osbaldistone Hall provides a clear indication as to the chaotic nature of life on the estate, and points to the disarray of the rest of Sir Hildebrand's affairs. The lack of control Sir Hildebrand has over his sons and the activities within his household are symptomatic of an overarching lack of control which ultimately backfires when it leads all of his sons into the rebellion, signaling the demise of his branch of the family. Rather than his family's consumption, then, it is this lack of control or lack of ability to lead his sons that is morally judged by the novel.

That this chaotic introduction occurs simultaneously with a scene of consumption is significant. Rather than a comforting domestic scene, this introduction presents Frank with the opposite – an alienating experience where he is very conscious of being the outsider. Similar to Fergus's banquet, Frank is surrounded by noise and confusion, as Edward was amidst the "scream" of bagpipes and "clang of the Celtic tongue" (*Waverley* 96, 97). Both feel similarly uncomfortable and out of their element – Edward cannot understand Gaelic (98) and Frank cannot find common ground with his relatives. Both flee the scene when alcohol starts flowing, though both have their own experiences of excess as well. Neither hero's actions are particularly heroic in the way in which they vacate the scenes of excess – Frank runs away when his cousins pursue him and ultimately flees through the window and into the garden, an enclosed space often relegated to female control. Edward is offered an excuse to leave from Fergus, who – ironically or not – invites him to join his sister's tea table, a space rife with feminine and domestic

connotations. Both heroes vacate scenes of stereotypic masculinity in favour of locations more closely associated with the domestic and feminine. Both men *choose* to leave these scenes of excess because they are uncomfortable and do not want to partake in the excess, or stand out because they choose to abstain. It is significant that none of the female characters in *Waverley* or *Rob Roy* are the excessive consumers – in these novels excess is solely the purview of men.

The consumption Frank's relatives engage in is conspicuous for its sheer volume and regularity but the fact that they are excessive consumers connects them to the larger commercial world. The novel is not explicit in revealing where or how they acquire the food and alcohol they consume and it is equally vague in revealing the productivity of the estate or how the family sustain themselves financially. Given the disarray of the estate and Sir Hildebrand's penchant for sport rather than more useful or productive endeavours, it seems likely that the food and drink they consume cannot all be sourced on the estate, therefore they must interact commercially. Unlike the self-sustaining estates of Bramble and Dennison, the Osbaldistone estate is more akin to the Baynard estate under Mrs. Baynard's rule than it was previously under Mr. Baynard.

The Osbaldistones' consumption is reminiscent of the way Smith views the post-feudal commercial aristocracy, discussed previously through the buckle-buying baron who "exchanged the maintenance of a thousand men for a year, and with it the whole weight and authority which it could give them" (Book III 512). Instead of using their wealth to support an army to rebel against the king, the Osbaldistones personally consume all of their assets, leaving them to fight in the rebellion themselves rather than leaving their army do it.

However, the Osbaldistones are not a direct reflection of Smith's picture because the reader never sees them buy diamond buckles or the equivalent, but given the equivocality in Smith's representation of the buckle-buying baron, this may make them more rather than less Smithian. They perform enough consumption of other goods – food, drink, and sport-related equipment (horses, dogs, guns, etc.) – to significantly harm themselves financially, but they do not purchase any of the extravagantly frivolous baubles Smith so disdains, perhaps signaling how untouched they are by the influences of fashion, or by feminine influence. In this way, the Osbaldistones seem to fall in between the cracks of Smith's

qualifications; they are an admixture of the two classifications – clearly not feudal in their lack of a personal army, but also not quite commercial in their resistance to (or ignorance of) the allure of diamond buckles.

Despite their participation in the rebellion, the Osbaldistones join the Jacobites from the standpoint of history and necessity rather than ideological agreement. Sir Hildebrand backed James II in the 1688 Revolution and seems to have passed on that allegiance to his sons. Considering the composite intelligence level (perhaps best illuminated in the fact that Wilfred dies fighting in the rebellion, having never been entirely clear as to which side he was fighting for and why), it is clear that Frank's cousins do not have a clear and independent understanding of their family's, much less their personal, political beliefs.

Though the Osbaldistones have a history of supporting the Stuarts, their participation in the rebellion is ultimately financially motivated. Frank observes that "[m]y poor uncle, [...] whose estate was reduced to almost nothing by his own carelessness and the expense and debauchery of his sons and household, was easily persuaded to join that unfortunate standard" (424). Rather than showing an overt agreement with the principles behind the Jacobite movement or displaying a genuine desire to overthrow the Hanovers, Sir Hildebrand becomes almost forced into participating. Laying upon Rashleigh's manipulations, "the ruin of his house, and the deaths of all his brethren" Sir Hildebrand declares that "neither he nor they would have plunged into political intrigue, but for that very member of his family who had been the first to desert them" (426). Because of Rashleigh, Sir Hildebrand feels they are obligated to join the rebellion. Until Rashleigh began plotting, Sir Hildebrand had laid aside his long-dormant relationship with the Stuarts, and whatever benefits or advancements he might have gained if James II's line had continued on the throne; Sir Hildebrand's "dreams of preferment, if he ever entertained any, *had died away* at the crisis which drove his patron from the throne [...]" (109, emphasis added). It is not so much that Sir Hildebrand gives up his ambitions, they simply die when it becomes clear that the Stuarts are not going to reacquire the throne. The verb "die" implies a permanency to the state of his ambition – unlike Baron Bradwardine, who actively still toasts the king over the water, Sir Hildebrand is no longer actively and consciously advocating the Stuarts' return. Were it not for Rashleigh, and for the

dire financial situation he finds himself in because of his family's excessive consumption habits, Sir Hildebrand would never have joined the rebellion or permitted his sons to join. His heavily qualified involvement in the rebellion suggests that he is not ideologically supportive of the Jacobites, and so should not automatically be relegated to Scotland's feudal past as his actions – were he not under duress – would not have placed him in that category.

It is unclear whether Sir Hildebrand recognises or acknowledges the cause of his economic insolvency; he firmly believes that Rashleigh is the sole cause of their involvement in the rebellion, and that it is his influence alone that puts them in that situation – we never hear him verbalise any other reason for joining the rebellion. It is Frank who notes the connection between Sir Hildebrand's finances and joining the uprising, rather than Sir Hildebrand himself. As Isaac Kramnick notes, the financial revolution dramatically changed everything with the institution of the national debt, the Bank of England, and giant trading companies:

A decisive break with the past was taking place in English social history during the Augustan period. A traditional order was giving way to institutions of a centralized and commercial society, and to an increasingly urban and middle class world. [...] The new depersonalized world seemed to render the individual helpless before forces much larger than himself. [...] The individual landowner or small trader seemed no longer capable of controlling his own destiny, but felt himself to be at the mercy of outside and impersonal forces manipulated by men he did not know or trust. (72)

Historically, as a small landowner, Sir Hildebrand would have been squeezed by the government through the land tax (Kramnick 59). According to Kramnick there was:

[...] virtual liquidation of scores of lesser Catholic gentry in the early years of the [eighteenth] century. Scarcely a Roman Catholic gentleman in the north country escaped inclusion on the registers of mortgaged estates. This led, in the years between the Restoration and 1750, to the near disappearance of the smaller gentry in the area, and the rise of vast agglomerations of landed estates; it was also, not surprisingly, accompanied by a noticeable political impact. (57-58)

The disaster of being forced to join the rebellion that falls on the Osbaldistones is inevitable due to the operation of outside economic forces, yet Sir Hildebrand's agency, or lack thereof, is also a cause.

The lack of political awareness and involvement on the part of the men of Osbaldistone Hall is another indicator that they are not fully part of the feudal category. As previously discussed, the Osbaldistones' adherence to Jacobitism is not based in ideological enthusiasm but rather through financial necessity and a sense of having no alternatives; the extent of their political involvement is questionable if

not negligible. Diana, however, is the most politically engaged member of the Osbaldistone family, far out-stripping her cousins and uncle in terms of involvement and overall understanding as well as overt loyalty to the Jacobites. From a civic humanist tradition, political engagement is the prerogative of the landed gentleman. That Sir Hildebrand neglects this duty and right shows him to be disconnected from contemporary politics but also the government at large; that Diana takes intellectual leadership over her uncle shows the estate to be distinctly post-feudal. Her engagement with contemporary politics is more akin to Rob Roy and her father, both of whom are clearly leaders in the movement. As Irvine points out, “[g]iven the continuing exclusion of women from most types of political debate, [...] the revelation that Diana is a political agent perhaps reflects the unsettling of the gender-relations of polite culture in the aftermath of 1789” (167-68). Rather than embodying the silly thoughtlessness often ascribed to female characters,⁴² Diana’s concerns show a (stereotypically) masculine engagement and awareness, which centres on *action* rather than the passive role often assigned to heroines.⁴³ And though her cousins are not physically passive in showing their support for the Stuarts once the rebellion starts, they possess a *mental* passivity and lack of analysis in terms of assessing their own actions. Their lack of political engagement reveals their rejection – whether conscious or not – of feudal traditions. It is their lack of adherence to traditional feudalism coupled with their persistent excessive consumption and their lack of unencumbered loyalty to the Jacobite cause that marks the Northumberland Osbaldistones as more commercial than feudal, and as part of the present economic system rather than relics of the past.

It is not just Osbaldistone Hall that does not fit neatly into the parameters of Smith’s stadial history – the primacy of London’s commercial centre as a representation of the pinnacle of modern civilisation is also called into question, not in terms of political economy but rather in the moral implications of commerce as the driving force behind a civilisation. Frank’s father along with Nicol Jarvie serve as representatives of commercial professionals, and though they each enjoy stellar reputations

⁴² Indiana Clermont in *Camilla*, Arabella in *The Female Quixote*, Isabella Thorpe in *Northanger Abbey*, Lydia Melford in *Humphry Clinker*, Priscilla Harrel in *Cecilia*, Maria and Julia Bertram in *Mansfield Park*, and Lydia Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice* are just a few examples.

⁴³ Passivity of Scott’s heroes in general is discussed by Welsh and Georg Lukács in *The Historical Novel* (32-37); Frank’s passivity in particular is discussed by Jane Millgate in “Rob Roy and the Limits of Frankness.”

and professional success there is an underlying moral dark side to their seemingly advantageous commercial transactions. Hanley argues that while Smith was an advocate of commercial society because of the benefits it brought to that society's members, particularly to the poor, he was very much aware of the moral downside to the system he supported.⁴⁴ Hanley suggests that "Smith's enthusiasm for commercial society hardly blinds him to its faults, and chief among the faults he identifies is the propensity of commercial society to induce and exacerbate such psychological ills as restlessness, anxiety, inauthenticity, duplicity, mediocrity, alienation, and indifference to others" (8); several of these ills are present in Scott's representatives of commercial society.

Though Frank's father is not present for much of the novel he is arguably the most important character to the plot's development, as it is because of the loss of his firm's letters of credit that Frank must go north into Scotland and it is these letters that catalyse the rebellion. Frank's involvement, it turns out, is unnecessary as his father returns from Holland before Frank has even reached Scotland or begun the recovery of the stolen letters:

[...] I learnt that my father had arrived from Holland shortly after Owen had set off for Scotland. Determined and rapid in all his movements, he only stopped to provide the means of discharging the obligations incumbent on his house. By his extensive resources, with funds enlarged, and credit fortified, by eminent success in his continental speculation, he easily accomplished what perhaps his absence alone rendered difficult, and set out for Scotland to exact justice from Rashleigh Osbaldistone, as well as to put order to his affairs in that country. (417-18)

Frank's pursuit of Rashleigh, then, appears superfluous – a boy's reaction to and interpretation of events best left to an adult with a wider understanding of the situation. Indeed, Frank's involvement arguably complicates the recovery of the letters to a greater degree than if his father had handled the affair himself.

Despite Frank's father's integrality to the plot, the novel paints him as a character with questionable motives. Frank relates:

Love of his profession was the motive which he chose should be most ostensible, when he urged me to tread the same path; but he had others with which I only became acquainted at a later period. Impetuous in his schemes, as well as skillful and daring, each new adventure, when successful, became at once the incentive, and furnished the means, for farther speculation. It seemed to be necessary to him, as to an ambitious conqueror, to push on from achievement, without stopping to secure, far less to enjoy, the acquisitions which he made. Accustomed to see his whole fortune trembling in the scales of chance, and dexterous at adopting expedients for

⁴⁴ Gillian Skinner also examines this issue.

casting the balance in his favour, his health and spirits and activity seemed ever to increase with the animating hazards on which he staked his wealth [...]. (70)

Frank's father enjoys the thrill of speculation and, as it "seemed to be necessary to him," he becomes addicted to it; his spirits and health improve as a result of the thrill of risk-taking – he thrives on it. The use of the word "speculation" is immediately flagged as suspect given the variety of eighteenth-century speculation failures that resulted in financial devastation for many. The Darien Scheme, the South Sea Bubble, and the Mississippi Bubble would all be known to Scott, who could be invoking them here. It is interesting to note that at the time of the action Frank has no knowledge of these seedier elements of his father's professional character, but as a much older adult, as Andrew Lincoln points out, he still offers no overt criticism of his father's behaviour (48-49), thus demonstrating a seeming lack of awareness. Frank describes his father:

[...] in the fluctuations of mercantile speculation, there is something captivating to the adventurer, even independent of the hope of gain. He who embarks on that fickle sea, requires to possess the skill of the pilot and the fortitude of the navigator, and after all may be wrecked and lost, unless the gales of fortune breathe in his favour. This mixture of necessary attention and inevitable hazard, the frequent and awful uncertainty whether prudence shall overcome fortune, or fortune baffle the schemes of prudence, affords full occupation for the powers, as well as for the feelings of the mind, and trade has all the fascination of gambling without its moral guilt. (67)

Despite Frank's claim that there is no moral guilt involved in trade's speculation and scheming, Scott suggests through his representation of commercial interaction that there *should* be a degree of moral obligation or understanding. Regardless of the particular schemes in which Frank's father is involved, it is clear that he is reckless and, in "adopting expedients for casting the balance in his favour" (70), seems to use whatever means necessary for achieving a favourable outcome. Though the novel never illuminates what exactly Frank's father is willing to do to achieve success, the ambiguity of the description invites a wide and varied interpretation.

Frank initially rejects his father's proposal of coming to work at Osbaldistone & Tresham, in favour of becoming a poet and it is this rejection that sets the entire premise of the novel. Frank's father does not disapprove of Frank's inclination towards a classical education as a manly accomplishment: "He had too much good sense not to perceive, that they sate gracefully upon every man, and he was sensible that they relieved and dignified the character to which he wished me to aspire" (70). He does, however,

object to a literary career, and “looked upon the labour of poets with contempt” (77). Because he wants Frank to succeed him at the firm and carry on when he is no longer able (71) he takes personal offence to Frank’s rejection of his personal wish. Frank admits in retrospect that “[i]magining myself certain of a large succession in future, and ample maintenance in the meanwhile, it never occurred to me that it might be necessary, in order to secure these blessings, to submit to labour and limitations unpleasant to my taste and temper” (71). The concept of having to work for his own sustenance does not cross Frank’s mind despite his father’s threat to replace him with one of his cousins should he fail to comply.

Frank’s father takes particular pride in what he has personally acquired: “Yes, Frank, what I have is my own, if labour in getting, and care in augmenting, can make a right of property; and no drone shall feed on my honeycomb” (79-80). The reference to Mandeville’s *Fable of the Bees* is conspicuous here, where Frank’s father sees Frank as a drain on his own resources. He feels neither inclined to share with a son who does not contribute, nor does he accept the idea of financially supporting Frank when he refuses to work at the firm. After Frank admits to wishing to be financially supported by his father while pursuing no profession, his father replies, ““That is to say, you wish to lean on my arm, and yet to walk your own way? That can hardly be, Frank [...]”” (83). For Mr. Osbaldistone, having Frank work at the firm is about ensuring that the work of the firm will go on, profitably, after he is gone, but it is also about seeing that his son is a productive and contributing member of society, a commercial society to which he has personally contributed.

The scathing way in which Mr. Osbaldistone describes Sir Hildebrand as his “fox-hunting brother” (79) shows his disdain for idle people of no profession; Frank however has yet to learn the distinction between working for money and receiving it without doing anything, and it is in fact unclear that he ever actually makes this distinction, given his lack of occupation at the novel’s end. Despite his initial rejection of his father’s proposition, Frank sympathises with how he imagines his father feels after learning of Rashleigh’s treachery; he responds to Diana’s criticism of the seemingly too-great emphasis he puts on the loss of money sustained by his father, saying:

‘I grieve not for the loss, but for the effect which I know it will produce on the spirits and health of my father, to whom the mercantile credit is as honour; and who, if declared insolvent, would sink into the grave, oppressed by a sense of grief, remorse, and despair, like that of a soldier

convicted of cowardice, or a man of honour who had lost his rank and character in society. All this I might have prevented by a trifling sacrifice of the foolish pride and indolence which recoiled from sharing the labours of his honourable and useful profession. Good Heaven! How shall I redeem the consequences of my error!’ (222)

Like Farmer Simmers’ myopic focus on farming in *The Wanderer*, the novel makes it clear that Frank’s father is perhaps too single-minded in his commercial pursuits; his relationship with Frank undoubtedly suffers because of it and his love of risk and mercantile adventure are flaws which lead the reader to regard him with suspicion. Yet despite these criticisms and alerts to potential misdeeds, Frank maintains a fervent belief in the respectability of his father’s profession, and though Frank does not couch his assessment of his father’s work in terms of political economy, the descriptor of “useful” is perhaps an acknowledgement of the lack of (economic) utility his career as a poet would have. Frank has an earlier conversation with his father, where he tries to explain his rejection of a commercial career: “‘It is impossible, sir, for me to have higher respect for any character than I have for the commercial, even were it not yours. [...] It connects nation with nation, relieves the wants, and contributes to the wealth of all; and is to the general commonwealth of the civilized world what the daily intercourse of ordinary life is to private society, or rather, what air and food are to our bodies’” (75). Despite painting such a noble Smithian picture of commercial pursuits, Frank still claims he is ill-qualified for the task, though he shortly thereafter becomes alarmed that his father will actually find him able enough for the job: “‘I perceived myself getting so fast into favour, that I began to fear the consequence would be my father’s more obstinate perseverance in his resolution that I must become a merchant; and, as I was determined to the contrary, I began to wish I had not [...] been so methodical’” (76). It is not a question of Frank’s ability so much as the profession’s desirability; it has none of the romance of a poet and so holds no charms for Frank, but the idleness of it is what Mr. Osbaldistone objects to.

The repeated reference to the honourable nature of Frank’s father’s profession is significant, as is the fact of its being called a “profession,” equating it with the more established and traditional callings of law, medicine, and the church. Earlier novels have not accorded commerce-oriented labour as deserving of such recognition as Frank’s father undoubtedly receives over the course of the novel. In Edgeworth’s *Patronage* (1814), for instance, none of the high-minded and profession-oriented (male) Percys choose a

career in commerce, favouring instead ones in the military, law, and medicine. The Falconers, the novel's contrast to the reputable Percys, choose the military, the church, and politics for their sons; their attachment to maintaining high social status precludes any of the family engaging with commercial pursuits despite the fact that they become, through necessity because of their extravagant expenditures, overtly concerned with money. In "Jane Austen and the Gentrification of Commerce," however, Jason Solinger argues that there is a perceptible shift in Austen's treatment of commerce, and those who actively engage in it, through the course of her lifetime; while Austen did not whole-heartedly embrace commerce, the hero of *Persuasion* (1818), who has risen through the "muddy, money-making, bread-and-butter-eating world" (Solinger 287) is treated far more kindly than any other commercially-oriented characters present in Austen's work, though she does ultimately suppress "certain practical aspects of life: namely, the commerce that made it possible" (287). Though *Rob Roy* presents commercial pursuits as noble and reputable, it also presents a hero who finds such a calling repugnant, and though he becomes reconciled to the prospect and does ultimately agree to work for his father, it is only after the substantial torment of guilt when he realises that the whole fiasco could have been avoided had he only initially complied with his father's wishes.

Mr. Osbaldistone's situation is unique, not only because he is part of the commercial profession, but also because he is the oldest son of a noble family who has *chosen* to be part of that particular profession; rather than part of the up-and-coming middling sort, Mr. Osbaldistone has made a sideways move into the professional world, seeking his fortune through labour rather than inheritance, and privileging his profession over idle, gentlemanly occupations. It must be acknowledged that his move into the professional world comes about through his disinheritance, though it is not entirely clear as to why he is disinherited. Harold Perkin argues in *Origins of English Society* that because of the open nature of England's aristocracy (Perkin 56-57) and the generally mobile nature of English society, commercial professionals were not looked down upon in Britain as much as in France or other Continental countries who had more closed social structures (Perkin 61). However, as Kramnick points out, given the degree to which small landowners would have felt alienated by the shift from traditional order to an increasingly commercial society, it is plausible that they would have felt some resentment at effectively being replaced

by merchants and commerce-oriented investors. As previously mentioned, this alienation and the “virtual liquidation of scores of lesser Catholic gentry” is one of the reasons many small landowners joined the Jacobite cause (Kramnick 57-58). Kramnick quotes from Edward Hughes’ *North Country Life in the Eighteenth Century*: ““One begins to suspect that the last civil war in England, the Jacobite, was due in no small degree to the desperate poverty of the northern Catholic gentry. Not that bankruptcy was a monopoly of adherents to the old faith, many others had little to lose”” (Hughes xvi quoted in Kramnick 58). Though Mr. Osbaldistone is forced from his position as small landowner through his disinheritance, he whole-heartedly embraces the commercial category – he actively participates in governmental affairs (despite not being a landowner that we know of, which would traditionally entitle him to political activity) and, through his firm, financially squeezes small landowners. Though it may seem unnatural for Mr. Osbaldistone to thoroughly embrace a profession and a lifestyle that seems to fly in the face of what he was initially brought up to do and be, it is a concentrated representation of Smith’s stadial schema: progression from agrarian to commercial society is embodied in one man’s experience.

Reiteration of Mr. Osbaldistone’s integrity and that of his firm recurs throughout the novel. What becomes questionable is the *need* to pursue such reiterations. If Osbaldistone & Tresham are *clearly* involved in only above-board business dealings, or if those on the receiving end of their transactions are consistently without complaint, would there be the same need to emphasise the legitimacy of the deal? The fact that the reputability of Mr. Osbaldistone’s business practices is even an issue in need of assurance or confirmation creates doubt in the reader’s mind, and perhaps in the characters’ as well, which in turn undermines the emphasised integrity.

This insistence upon Mr. Osbaldistone’s integrity in business is again brought to the fore in the context of the consumption of Scotland’s forests, in the Highlands in particular. While recounting the prejudicial opinion Frank has of the Scots, which has been instilled in him from birth, it is revealed that his father has business dealing with Scottish landowners:

[...] I looked upon the Scottish people during my childhood, as a race hostile by nature to the more southern inhabitants of this realm; and this view of the matter was not much corrected by the language which my father sometimes held with respect to them. He had engaged in some large speculations concerning oak-woods, the property of Highland proprietors, and alleged, that

he found them much more ready to make bargains, and extort earnest of the purchase-money, than punctual in complying on their side of the terms of the engagements. (95)

The lack of detail given regarding this transaction, coupled with the fact that Frank's father enjoys financial risk-taking and speculation, makes this interaction appear ethically questionable, particularly given Jarvie's later comments. Regarding the money Osbaldistone & Tresham owe to MacVittie & MacFin, Jarvie parenthetically comments to Owen, "[...] shame fa' their souple snouts! They made that and mair out o' a bargain about the aik-woods at Glen-Cailziechat, that they took out atween my teeth – wi' help o' your gude word, I maun needs say, Mr. Owen – but that makes nae odds now'" (267). Jarvie feels cheated out of acquiring the forest that Osbaldistone & Treshman bought and implies that there was something underhanded in the transaction which not only stole it from him, but made the London firm such a substantial profit. Jarvie later enumerates further dealings in timber speculation, revealing the domino effect the failure of Osbaldistone & Tresham would have on the Glasgow merchants and the Highland economy, which is Rashleigh's intention in order to catalyse the rebellion:

Ye maun think that in thae twenty years be-gane, some o' the Hieland lairds and chiefs hae come to some sma' sense o' their ain interest – your fater and others hae bought the woods of Glen-Disseries, Glen Kissoch, Tober-na-Kippoch, and mony mair besides, and your fater's house has granted large bills in payment, and as the credit o' Osbaldistone and Tresham was gude – for I'll say before Mr. Owen's face as I wad behind his back, that, bating misfortunes o' the Lord's sending, nae men could be mair honourable in business – the Hieland gentlemen, holders o' thae bills, hae found credit in Glasgow and Edinburgh [...] for all, or the greater part of the contents o' thae bills. [...] [I]f these bills are not paid, the Glasgow merchant comes on the Hieland lairds, whae hae deil a boddle o' siller, and will like ill to spew up what is item a' spent – They will turn desperate – five hundred will rise that might hae sitten at hame – the deil will gae ower Jock Wabster – and the stopping of your fater's house will hasten the outbreak that's been sae lang biding us. (306)

Despite insisting on how "honourable in business" Osbaldistone & Tresham are, Jarvie also articulates the extraordinary risk they take in their reliance on credit, leaving all participants in the interaction vulnerable.

While speculation in timber is a legitimate means of investment, it is also significant in its symbolism. The oak leaf was the plant badge of the Stuarts (Innes 280) as well as a weighty symbol in ancient Celtic tradition. In using oak forests throughout *Rob Roy*, Scott is perhaps invoking the Ossianic tradition, which consistently references oaks. Ossian, according to McNeil, became a means through which Scots could maintain their cultural and literary heritage in the wake of the Union: "Ossian [...] played a key role in establishing a Scottish model of British 'identity-in-difference.' By trumpeting

Scotland's noble Gael, Ossian's supporters sought to 'maximise difference,' [...] by reminding Scots and the rest of Britain that Scotland remained a different nation still" (26).⁴⁵ When Frank first arrives at Osbaldistone Hall he describes it as "[...] a large and antiquated edifice, peeping out from a Druidical grove of huge oaks" (100). The reference to both oaks and Druid tradition here is particularly interesting considering that the Ossianic symbolism McNeil refers to in reference to Scotland would not carry the same weight in Northumberland; the description of Osbaldistone Hall underlines the antiquity of the building rather than any political significance. The trees mentioned in *Waverley*, however, do not seem to carry the same continuity of resonance; the avenue leading to the Bradwardine mansion situated close to the Highland line is lined with horse-chestnuts and sycamores (34), though the English Waverley Chase is surrounded by oaks (329). Selling off oak forests represents a selling off or disowning of the Stuart legacy – a disassociation with that particular facet of Scottish history. Like the tree harvesting seen in *The Absentee*, cutting down oak trees under the command and ownership of an absent English owner is further dissociation, as well as playing into power dynamics between north and south, particularly as the trees would then be used for financial gain without profiting the local economy. Jarvie is bothered by the Highland lords' seeming inability to look after their own interests – rather than selling their woods for the short-term gain of receiving credit and having purchasing power in Glasgow, they could take a longer-term view of the financial gain to be made in using their own land for their own interests. Or perhaps, if nothing else, these lords could insist on outright payment instead of credit. Jarvie shifts the locus of guilt from the perpetrators of the (alleged) exploitation, Osbaldistone & Tresham, and moves it to the Highlanders who have not taken responsibility for their own – or in the context of the rebellion, the nation's – financial interests.

That Jarvie finds fault with the Highlanders rather than with the system allowing the exploitation further reveals his commercial orientation, and is part of what Scott criticises in commercial society's status as the pinnacle of civilisation. Lincoln offers a similar critique of the financial implications of Osbaldistone Sr. and Jarvie, viewing their actions more specifically as a critique of mercantilism:

⁴⁵ Also see Shields and Trumpener on Ossian and national identity.

Osbaldistone has bought up highland forests without any concern for, or knowledge of, those who live in the highlands. He trades with distant merchants without any clear knowledge of how they might use or abuse the power this connection gives them. The culture of credit has given unsympathetic or unscrupulous creditors the legal right to throw Owen in prison, and to evict Rob Roy's family from their homes. It has placed alarming power in the hands of the Jacobite Rashleigh. Through such details, the novel confirms a number of Adam Smith's criticisms of mercantilism. (48)

Lincoln faults Osbaldistone Sr. for blindly engaging in business transactions without considering the consequences to all of the parties involved. Rather than questioning the morality or ethical standard of the commercial system behind the firm's ability to pay for vast swathes of timber with credit only, Lincoln focuses more specifically on the mercantilist aspects potentially under critique. However, whether through a mercantilist or free trade economic system, the questionable moral nature of the commercial interaction remains.

Everett Zimmerman offers a different interpretation of Osbaldistone & Tresham's buying up of Highland forests, seeing Jarvie's reaction as more positive in that the transactions bring commerce and commercial profit to the impoverished Highlands (Zimmerman 226). Zimmerman does, however, acknowledge that commercial progress is not, perhaps, purely beneficial:

Timber was in demand in England and Scotland, and charcoal made from local trees was thought to be a viable alternative to coal in Highland locations where iron was smelted. [...] Scott's pronounced emphasis on the characteristic natural beauty of the Highlands may cause us to wonder if the commercial exploitation of the remaining timber of an already largely deforested Highlands is perhaps another of his [...] examples of the conflicts between commercial values and Highland culture. (227)

Though the transactions between Osbaldistone & Tresham and the Highlanders bring commerce and commercial interaction to the Highlands, the benefits are tenuous considering their reliance on credit, a notoriously unstable form of payment. The conflict present in this scenario is not, as Zimmerman suggests, simply a matter of values and culture, but of the lack of moral obligation inherent in commercial exchange.

Jarvie, as well as Osbaldistone Sr., serves as a symbol of commercial society. Like Rob Roy, Jarvie subverts the expectation that Scotland is primitive and commercially underdeveloped. According to Cockshut, the novel shows that "Jarvie is the hero, Jarvie is right, Protestantism is right and the new commercial ethic, though admittedly capable of debasement, is right if held with honest and generous

intentions” (169); while I do not agree that the novel is as black and white as Cockshut makes it out to be, Cockshut’s interpretation of the centrality of the “commercial ethic” is in keeping with the readings of others. David Brown similarly posits that Jarvie is “the right kind of man [...] to take advantage of these preconditions for commercial prosperity” (101). Duncan asserts that Jarvie:

is the novel’s spokesman for an ascendant sociology of commerce, legality, and civic virtue, as well as being the proprietor of a West-India plantation. Jarvie rehearses the Smithian account of modernity that identifies it with mercantile capitalism and the institutions of a post-1688 national economy: the Stock Exchange, colonial free trade, a national debt. [...] Jarvie’s ‘statistical account’ appears to occupy a position of authority in *Rob Roy* [...]. (93)

Like McLeod in *Ennui* and Burke in *The Absentee*, Jarvie serves as a modern Smithian mouthpiece, though unlike the other two, Jarvie is not embedded within an otherwise less commercially advanced environment. Jarvie’s interests are further reaching than the commercial centre of Glasgow or even of Scotland as a whole, extending to the wider venue of the empire as evidenced in his colonial holdings. He has a broad, wide-ranging view of possibilities for personal profit, and profits for Scotland overall. Rather than a pre-commercial man, stuck in a pastoral or agrarian phase, Jarvie is a thriving symbol of Scotland’s economic potential.

As a harbinger of Scottish commercial innovation and a symbol of Scottish improvement,

Jarvie’s visions for Scotland have commercial prospects and profit at their core. Frank relates that Jarvie:

undertook to prove the possibility of draining the lake [Loch Lomond], and ‘giving to plough and harrow many hundred, ay, many a thousand acres, from whilk no man could get earthly gude e’enow, unless it were a gedd, or a dish or perch now and then.’ [...] [I]t was part of his project to preserve a portion of the lake just deep enough and broad enough for the purposes of water-carriage, so that coal-barges and gabbards should pass as easily between Dumbarton and Glenfalloch as between Glasgow and Greenock. (415-16)

Though the idea of barges disrupting the romantic view of Loch Lomond is repugnant to Frank, it is significant that Jarvie designates a means through which Scots can be proactive in their own economy, rather than relying – as Osbaldistone & Tresham’s business partners have enforced – on southern patrons and, of course, he would personally profit by it immensely. As mentioned previously, Jarvie notes that it is time the Highlanders – or Scots in general – took an active role in developing themselves commercially, or, as Jarvie says, “Ye maun think that in thae twenty years by-gane, some o’ the Hieland lairds and chiefs hae come to som sma’ sense o’ their ain interest [...]” (306). However, though Jarvie’s interests in

developing Scotland seem altruistically nationalistic, he is not without self-serving motives as well. As the son of a deacon and a similarly trade-oriented individual, Jarvie is part of the ascending middle class, a professional, without ties to the aristocracy or gentry and thus without the same kinds of concerns pertaining to land and political influence embodied in characters of earlier novels; his middling background seems to free him from the baggage inherited and carried by the landowning gentry. Jarvie is not, however, entirely without complication – he could be among those commercially-minded people discussed previously who put pressure on the likes of Sir Hildebrand with the goal of expanding their investments to land-ownership which, as Kramnick points out, is more symbolic of holding power than actually signifying power; the *ability* to buy land in the first place is a show of wealth and power (Kramnick 59). Jarvie's middling status does not necessarily free him, then, from the complications of landed power especially as Jarvie is not without political influence. Clearly, as Bailie, he is a figure of some importance. The *OED*, describes a bailie as “*formerly*, [t]he chief magistrate of a barony or part of a county, having functions equivalent to those of a sheriff” (n.2a). His colonial holdings (220, 232) and imperial interests also show him to be a figure not unconcerned with the larger dealings of the nation. Lincoln suggests that Jarvie's colonial holdings further indicate the novel's critique of mercantilism: “Ownership of a plantation in Jamaica implicates the Bailie indirectly in the slave trade, a fact perhaps hinted at in the reference to the ‘decent man’ Captain Coffinkey” (Lincoln 48), who is an associate of Jarvie's in the West Indies. As part of commercial society Jarvie looks forward to Scotland's production-oriented future but is clearly also looking out for his own financial gain, and though his business dealings within Britain are not as overtly suspect as those of Mr. Osbaldistone, he is similarly morally implicated, particularly through his dealings in the slave trade.

The questionable honour in commercial professions represented in *Rob Roy* is connected to the issue of credit. As seen in previous chapters, credit was an unstable and fickle basis for commercial transactions despite its ubiquity; in *Rob Roy* credit is similarly integral, but further differentiation is made between characters as to whether traditional conceptions of honour and modern credit can coincide. As Frank observes to Diana, “[...] the mercantile credit is as honour [to my father]; and who, if declared insolvent, would sink into the grave, oppressed by a sense of grief, remorse, and despair, like that of a

soldier convicted of cowardice, or a man of honour who had lost his rank and character in society” (222). Mr. Osbaldistone is defined by his good credit. Jarvie places a similar emphasis on credit but is more direct in his perception of honour than Frank: ““But I maun hear naething about honour – we ken naething here but about credit. Honour is a homicide and a blood spiller, that gangs about making frays in the street; but Credit is a decent honest man, that sits at hame, and makes the pat play”” (297). Jarvie’s interpretation of credit as “a decent honest man,” however, does not find representation within the novel, as the rebellion is catalysed by threats to credit; it is the potential *lack* of credit, to both the firm and the Highland recipients of the firm’s credit, that aids the rebellion’s instigation. Credit is then not “a decent honest man” but more akin to the blood spiller Jarvie finds honour to be. Lincoln makes the distinction between Mr. Osbaldistone and Rob Roy in terms of credit as well: “The moral difference between Osbaldistone senior, whose commercial speculations are successful, and Rob Roy, who was ruined by his own gambles with credit, lies not in the drive for gain, which they share, but in Rob’s readiness to acknowledge its amoral nature” (52). This distinction returns again to the reputability, or honour, of Frank’s father and the way in which he goes about his business. It raises the question, though, of whether Lincoln thinks that Mr. Osbaldistone shows awareness of the amorality of his speculations and chooses not to acknowledge it, or whether he does not actually think of it as amoral. The latter would mean he is, perhaps, simply a bit naïve though the novel does not characterise him this way, but the former would indicate an intentional duplicity, which further problematises the alleged respectability not only of him personally and of his firm, but of his profession in general; Lincoln, however, does not make this distinction. Both Jarvie and Osbaldistone Sr. hold productivity and profit in high reverence, and though the latter is said to compare mercantile credit to honour, it should be emphasised that it is Frank who makes this comparison and not his father; Mr. Osbaldistone’s perception of his own honour or credit are never revealed, (though it is telling that, rather than saying “upon my honour,” Frank’s father says, “upon my credit” [78]) but it is significant that Frank must create this comparison in order to fully understand his father and the importance good credit holds for him.

The potential conflict between honour and credit can be further explained in terms of stadal history, whereby “honour” is a feudal virtue while “credit” is a commercial one. Both Frank’s father and

Jarvie are representatives of the commercial world; both firmly believe in the benefits of commercial society and thrive personally and professionally by adhering to it. Frank, on the other hand, is less assured of where he stands on the commercial/feudal divide – he is torn between following his own inclinations and pursuing a literary career as a poet or following the dictates of his father and joining him in the commercial world. Frank asks for Jarvie’s advice following his near-duel with Rashleigh: “[u]pon these matters I am now to ask your advice, Mr. Jarvie, which, I have no doubt, will point out the best way to act for my father’s advantage and my own honour” (297). The distinction made here is subtle but telling: Frank wishes to work for his father’s financial advantage and his own honour – the two are separate but intermixed. In restoring his father’s credit and financial standing he will simultaneously restore his own honour; though credit both financially and professionally is certainly more important to Mr. Osbaldistone than perhaps it should be, honour and credit are here inextricably linked and in fact dependent on each other.

This intermixing of feudal and commercial is reflective of Frank’s confusion in the novel, which also reflects back on the hybrid state of Osbaldistone Hall. As Irvine points out, “[...] what he [Frank] finds at Osbaldistone Hall, in the difference between Diana and her cousins, is not a past or passing stage of society, but a caricature of his own discursive situation; not the ‘feudal’ *per se*, but the feudal in its constitutive opposition to politeness. Osbaldistone Hall represents modernity as an unfinished product” (163); the novel, I would add, also represents Frank as such.

Throughout the novel Frank embodies a variety of contradictions. He disdains drunkenness but resorts to it as a coping mechanism and emotional outlet; he is educated abroad where he learns his “distaste for intemperance” (116) but unlike Clermont Lynmere or other Grand Tour participants, Frank does not return as a fop. He makes sure to clarify that while he spent the majority of his time in Bordeaux doing anything but the mercantile training he was supposed to be engaged with, his “conduct was regulated by the bounds of decency and good order” so that Dubourg, his patron, could have “no evil report to make” (72). He initially rejects working for his father (in a productive kind of labour through the near-literal creation of money) in favour of pursuing (the unproductive labour of) poetry. These contradictions show Frank to be caught between past and present – between the romance of pre-

commercial (potentially unproductively labouring) man, and the more pragmatic, modern commercial man. Yet it is not as simple as deciding for one or the other – the values associated with past and present are linked, and the seeming contradictoriness of Frank is a reflection of his status as a bridge between the two. Frank’s romantic sensibilities throughout the novel belie his obligatory acceptance of working at his father’s firm at the novel’s conclusion. His romantic sensibilities – and his desire to be a gentleman poet – are an economic or productive throwback when considered from the time that Scott was writing; Frank presents a contradictory mix of (anachronistic) post-Wordsworthian Romantic and commercially-minded businessman, content to wander the hills and write poetry, yet ultimately agreeing to embrace the commercial occupation of his father, for which he has a seemingly natural talent. Though he, unlike his father or Jarvie, is romantically inclined and would, for instance, hate to see the atmosphere of Loch Lomond changed solely to benefit Scottish commerce, he also whole-heartedly rejects his cousins’ idle way of life, the excess of their indulgences and their overall impolite manners. Though the values of past and present are intertwined in his actions, it seems as though Frank does not know which lifestyle to embrace, and is in a sense at a cross-roads choosing whether to pursue the line of his father and Jarvie and embrace future commercial expansion, or live in his own pre-commercial, aesthetically Romantic (despite the fact that in 1715 Romanticism had yet to blossom) “unproductive” bubble.

Though *The Wealth of Nations* offers a thorough look into the political economy of each of the stadial phases, Smith does not address the place of the aesthetic within this stadial scheme; he ignores the particularities of culture and nationhood when discussing the how and why of production. Much like the way he largely ignores the role of consumption in his analysis of the production of wealth, he ignores the importance of culture in contributing to the economic progression of civilisation and the effects such progress has on culture. We see this juxtaposition between economic production and the aesthetic in Frank’s conflict regarding working for his father.

The narratology of the novel is a way of illuminating this juxtaposition between the aesthetic and the commercial – Frank represents the aesthetic, and the struggle of the aesthetic to combat the seeming ugliness of the commercial, as represented in the lack of ethics/morals in Jarvie and Osbaldistone Sr. But Frank is also the narrator, and everything given to the reader is vetted through Frank first, albeit an older

Frank who is a bit wiser and critical of his younger self. The aesthetic is everything that is left out of Smith's account in *The Wealth of Nations* – and not accounted for in his stadial history; this perhaps accounts for Frank's personal chaos and contradiction – for his inability to articulate his emotions, his inability to speak,⁴⁶ his inability to connect to any stage in the stadial progression or clearly identify where he wants to be in terms of a profession. The aesthetic has no place in stadial history just as Frank has no fixed place, no solid home, within the novel.

Frank-as-narrator is just as much a force within the novel as Frank-as-character. Lincoln posits that “[h]e [Frank's older self as narrator] continually judges the personal failings of his past self, his youthful rashness and filial disobedience, but his more general views – those that relate to the wider meaning of his story – remain unrevised” (49). Millgate similarly posits that because of the trauma Frank experiences throughout the story he is unable to “release the meaning of past experience or to provide a bridge between past and present selves” (394) – his narration, in effect, remains unreflective. Given that Frank-as-narrator is significantly older than the Frank-as-character and has the benefit of hindsight, he could more clearly see the big-picture economic implications of the events of his youth. The younger Frank, however, does not care for issues of political economy, and the older Frank cannot remember the details of such issues, as when he recounts Jarvie's plan for Loch Lomond: “Amidst a long discussion, which he ‘crammed into mine ear against the stomach of my sense,’ I only remember that it was part of his project to preserve a portion of the lake [...]” (416). However, when we consider how vividly Frank-as-narrator remembers, and declares that he will continue to remember, other events – particularly those related to his father – his forgetfulness of matters of political economy seem more conspicuous.

On recounting his arrival home from Bourdeaux and his initial exchanges with his father, Frank relates that “I shall never forget our first interview” (67-68). And again shortly thereafter, “I shall long remember that dinner-party” (69); the traumatic import of these interactions with his father is so strong that even at the end of his life he makes a point of relaying that he will always remember these particular moments. In recounting how his father asked him every day whether he would come work at the counting-house, the older Frank reflects that, “I thought at the time there was something unkind in this;

⁴⁶ See Irvine's chapter on *Rob Roy* in *Enlightenment and Romance*.

and I still think that my father's conduct was injudicious. A more conciliatory treatment would, in all probability, have gained his purpose" (83). At the novel's end there is yet another interjection revealing the emotion of the memory: "My old eyelids still moisten at the recollection of our meeting [...]" (417). The clarity of these aesthetic, emotive memories and the emotional resonance they still carry decades later assert themselves in the text in a way the economically or politically tinged memories do not. Frank experiences a similar declaration of remembrance when in the Highlands:

I shall never forget the delightful sensation with which I exchanged the dark, smoky, smothering atmosphere of the Highland hut, in which we had passed the night so uncomfortably, for the refreshing fragrance of the morning air, and the glorious beams of the rising sun, which, from a tabernacle of purple and golden clouds, were darted full on such a scene of natural romance and beauty as had never before greeted my eyes. (343)

This particular memory highlights Frank's poetic consciousness and the primacy of the aesthetic within that consciousness. Frank remembers those situations or interactions that resonate with what he finds important; clearly, economic and political details are not among these.

Frank's Romantic inclination focuses particularly on the aesthetic of landscape. In their journey down Loch Lomond, Jarvie's "improvements" to make the loch more profitable and productive stand in stark contrast to the musings of Frank, who relates that his own thoughts "were sad enough; yet I felt something soothing in the magnificent scenery with which I was surrounded; and thought, in the enthusiasm of the moment, that had my faith been that of Rome, I could have consented to live and die a lonely hermit in one of the romantic and beautiful islands amongst which our boat glided" (415). Contrasted to the calculations and evaluations of profitability in which Jarvie immerses himself, Frank's thoughts are distinctly "unproductive" in their spiritual, aesthetic focus. Zimmerman notes that, "Jarvie's comic perception and aesthetic deficiencies are an index to the limitations of the world of commerce, which cannot create a prosperous Highlands without destroying its culture, intertwined as that culture is (at least depicted by Scott) with its setting" (225). Like Jarvie, however, Frank is limited in his perception of Scotland – rather than seeing it as a whole, Frank seems most enamoured by the romantic landscape. Like Jarvie, he compartmentalises Scottish culture and society, focusing solely on what he finds aesthetically pleasing and glossing over the rest, including the economic opportunities Jarvie sees, and the cultural appreciation Zimmerman posits.

The antagonism the novel establishes between the aesthetic and commerce, which is represented in the antagonism between Frank and his father, catalysed by Frank's ambition to pursue poetry, is seemingly reconciled through Frank's acquiescence to join the commercial ranks. On being reunited with his father after his adventures in Scotland, he consents to taking a desk in his father's firm, and though his father does not force him to follow through – it seems as though the gesture is enough – and Frank ends up living his ideal idle gentleman's life, he never mentions poetry again. He does, however, continue to write, as evidenced in the memoir he writes for Tresham. It is not poetry, but it perhaps explains the contradiction presented between the creation in *Rob Roy* of a character who rescinds his dream of poet-as-productive-profession and the introduction Scott offers five years later in the 1822 "Introductory Epistle" to *The Fortunes of Nigel*:

I do say it, in spite of Adam Smith and his followers, that a successful author is a productive labourer, and that his works constitute as effectual a part of the public wealth, as that which is created by any other manufacture. If a new commodity, having an actually intrinsic and commercial value, be the result of the operation, why are the author's bales of books to be esteemed a less profitable part of the public stock than the goods of any other manufacturer? I speak with reference to the diffusion of the wealth arising to the public, and the degree of industry which even such a trifling work as the present must stimulate and reward, before the volumes leave the publisher's shop. Without me it could not exist, and to this extent I am a benefactor to the country. As for my own emolument, it is won by my toil, and I account myself answerable to Heaven only for the mode in which I expend it. The candid may hope it is not all dedicated to selfish purposes; and, without much pretensions to merit in him who disburses it, a part may 'wander, heaven-directed, to the poor.' (xxvii-xxviii)

If we look at Frank as the author of his memoir rather than simply the narrator of the novel, then he has not, in fact, given up on being a productive member of the literary world but has merely shifted genre; through his status as an author he is, according to Scott, "a benefactor to the country" because the profit he generates eventually returns to the economy. There is, then, perhaps less conflict between the aesthetic and political economy after all, if Frank-as-author-as-narrator is interpreted as a productive labourer. The key, however, is in Scott's distinction that a "*successful* author is a productive labourer"; an author who labours to produce a financially unsuccessful work is presumably still "unproductive." In her article, "Fictional Economies: Adam Smith, Walter Scott and the Nineteenth-Century Novel," Kathryn Sutherland discusses Scott's interpretation of authorship as productive labour in the context of Smith's division of labour and the mechanistic means of producing literature. "The statement [in the preface to *Fortunes of Nigel*]

contains an overt challenge to the political economic Adam Smith, whose categorization of the arts in general as ‘unproductive labour’ provides the informing note of a discussion that Scott conducts intermittently through his novels on the exchange- and commodity-value of literature” (Sutherland 100). Frank’s father is perhaps softened to his son’s literary ambition by coming to view it as productive labour, however, the text does not support this. It does reveal that “the large profits which accrued from the rapid rise of the funds upon the suppression of the rebellion and the experience he had so lately had of the perils of commerce, encouraged him to realize [...] a considerable part of his property” (427), which leads him to send Frank to take up residence at Osbaldistone Hall. Money, and perhaps realising the precariousness of wealth based on commercial schemes, effectively allows for Mr. Osbaldistone’s acquiescence to his son’s preference rather than his realisation of the economic worth of creative labour.

The reclamation of Osbaldistone Hall by Frank’s father only serves to further complicate their relationship. Zimmerman posits that in ultimately leaving the estate to Frank Sir Hildebrand’s will repairs Mr. Osbaldistone’s disgraceful and wrongful disinheritance: “[...] the linking of Osbaldistone Hall and Osbaldistone and Tresham is a resolution of the conflicts between the commercial world and that of inherited land, especially as Osbaldistone Hall’s accumulated mortgages are bought back by Frank’s father” (231). Though this linkage may ease the tension for Frank’s father, I would argue that this seeming reparation only further complicates Frank’s position. Through receiving the benefits of the commercial sector through his father, Frank is, in theory, allowed to flourish in the aesthetic, yet despite his father’s blessing to pursue his aesthetic ideal the reader is left with the sense that this ideal perhaps does not live up to expectations. In funding Frank’s retreat to the aesthetic and maintaining him financially so that he does not have to pursue any kind of career, the aesthetic and the commercial could, as Zimmerman suggests, be seen to reconcile and exist harmoniously, but it seems that the tension between them still exists because Frank is ultimately still dependent on his father, a situation we know the father, at least formerly, found unconscionable. Though, presumably, on his father’s death Frank inherits substantial wealth and does not need to worry about dependence (though it never seems to worry him in the novel), he is still living off the profits made through commerce and the productive labours of his father rather than producing anything himself, until, that is, he writes his memoir.

The conflict, however mitigated, between Frank's aesthetic inclinations and the commercial and political focus of his father and their society at large is tied to Scott's complication of the expected stadial progression seen in *Waverley* as Frank travels south to north. In making Frank, the novel's ostensible hero, an effectively anti-commercial symbol generating from the heart of commercial society, the precedent for meeting these expectations is altered. In questioning the valourisation of commercial society, Scott turns the whole idea of social advancement based on economic progression on its head; Frank's aestheticism, his Romantically-inclined character, are removed from an economically-based stadial progression, thus further complicating the expectations set forth in *Waverley* and suggesting the need for greater incorporation of the aesthetic, creative, and emotional in society rather than the mechanistic and impersonal focus set forth by commercial leaders like Jarvie and Osbaldistone Sr. Through these complications, Scott questions the lack of value inhered to creative production and the over-emphasis placed on the alleged social and political benefits of commercial society.

Despite questioning the valourisation of commercial society, political and economic forces define history for Scott. In *Waverley* the political conflict of the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion is the basis of the plot as is the 1715 Rebellion in *Rob Roy*, though the action of the rebellion in the latter takes place in the background while Edward is an active participant in the former. Scott's 1745 rebellion echoes back to Fielding's inclusion of the same, in which Tom intends to fight on the Hanoverian side. Both Fielding and Scott draw on personal morality as a driving force in both character motivation and the plot as a whole: Tom's conscience prevents him from breaking Sophia's banknote despite his desperate need for money, and his desire to return it to her aids in driving the novel's plot; Edward's moral sense ultimately saves the life of Colonel Talbot and by extension his own and that of Baron Bradwardine. *Waverley* is Scott's own "new Province of Writing," his own generic innovation that proved not only wildly successful but influential as well. Unlike Fielding, however, Scott looks at the bigger picture of history, as shown through *Waverley*'s subtitle, *Or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*; though Fielding invokes history as well through the full title *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling*, it is a more personal, individualised history compared to the historical events related in *Waverley* through the lens of sixty years distance. *Rob Roy* offers this kind of historical analysis in hindsight as well, though Frank's retrospective is more

personalised than that offered by the narrator in *Waverley*. In these similarities and modifications between Fielding and Scott we see how far the novel has come since Fielding's forays into the "new Province of Writing."

Conclusion

Published in the same year as Scott's *Rob Roy*, Austen's *Northanger Abbey* has often been discussed as a novel through which the silly or inconsequential nature of certain types of novels is playfully critiqued. It is also, however, a novel very much aware of public opinion regarding popular novels; in it Austen pleads for solidarity among novelists as well as advocates for an improved perception of novels and their authors:

Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. From pride, ignorance, or fashion, our foes are almost as many as our readers. [...] [T]here seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them. (*Northanger* 60)

What Austen pleads for in *Northanger Abbey* is similar to what motivates Fielding's "new Province of Writing" nearly seventy years earlier – respect for the labours of the author and a distinction between works of "genius, wit, and taste" and the likes of those that both Austen and Fielding poke fun at and attempt to distance themselves from.

In his "Introductory Epistle" to *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Scott defends the profits he has made from his writing; he rebuts the concern that "an unworthy motive may be assigned for this rapid succession of publication [...]" through which he could "be supposed to work merely for the lucre of gain" (xxxvi):

Supposing that I did permit the great advantages which must be derived from success in literature, to join other motives in inducing me to come more frequently before the public, - that emolument is the voluntary tax which the public pays for a certain species of literary amusement – it is extorted from no one, and paid, I presume, by those only who can afford it, and who receive gratification in proportion to the expense. If the capital sum which these volumes have put into circulation be a very large one, has it contributed to my indulgences only? or can I not say to hundreds, from Honest Duncan the paper manufacturer, to the most snivelling of the printer's devils, 'Didst thou not share?' I profess I think our modern Athens much obliged to me for having established such an extensive manufacture; and when universal suffrage comes in fashion, I intend to stand for a seat in the House on the interest of all the unwashed artificers connected with literature. (xxxvi-vii)

While Scott, like Austen, argues for greater value to be placed on the efforts of authors' labour, he does so from a wider economic perspective. As if in answer to Giles Arber's harangue regarding the value of labour in *The Wanderer*, Scott justifies his profits through the fact that the public choose to pay for their entertainment, that the money generated through his creations benefits others as well as himself, and that

his literary contributions have substantially forwarded Edinburgh's publishing industry. Though a testament to the novel's advancement in popularity and availability, Scott's success did not go unremarked among his literary peers. Austen complains in a letter to her niece: "Walter Scott has no business to write novels, especially good ones. – It is not fair. – He has fame and Profit enough as a Poet, and should not be taking the bread out of other people's mouths. –I do not like him, and do not mean to like Waverley if I can help it – but fear I must" (*Letters* 277). Rather than a plea for solidarity or appropriate valuation of the labour of authors, Austen acknowledges here, as Copeland points out, the competition inherent within the literary marketplace (191); this competition is for the consumption of their works by the reading public. With Scott's celebrity and the heightened consumption of his works, the novel enters a new age.

In the end, this project has shown ways in which novels of the long eighteenth century complicate representations of consumption. As the introduction shows, scholarship on this period tends to fixate on certain aspects of consumption – gender implications, emulation, colonial hierarchies, and the broad umbrella catch-all of "commerce." The novels of the period are of course not that straightforward or boxed in; they represent some or all or, like *Tom Jones*, do something entirely different with the theme of consumption. Each novel in some way articulates the consumption-related anxieties of the society it was produced in, anxieties novels also create and perpetuate, but they are not solely about these concerns; rather, they offer many instances of complication and reclamation of a society seemingly or allegedly spun out of control on the excesses of "stuff." In the process, we have seen ways in which perceptions of consumption changed through the course of the long eighteenth century, how novels are a force in that change, and how the genre modifies and adapts shifting perceptions. The ways in which British society deals with the spectre of conspicuous consumption through its literature over time reveals how the novel genre evolves, through the changing ways issues of consumption address and inform gender stigmas and stereotypes, constructions of national identity and national stereotypes, and how Britain deals with its status as a commercial society, as a "nation of shopkeepers" (Smith Book IV 197). In addressing the moral implications of consumption and the way they shift over time, the novel foregrounds the moral implications of commercial society in ways that political economic writings, Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* in particular, do not. In this way, novels examined here offer a reassessment of consumption,

explaining how novels before and after Smith show the conflict between civic humanism and Smithian political economy.

The shift in how novels shape ideals of consumption is gradual, multivalent, and circuitous. Issues of self-sufficiency on the level of the estate, seen in *Humphry Clinker*, shift in tone to become more overtly economic in *Ennui* and *The Absentee* with discussions of productivity and social leadership. Personal debt in *Camilla* comes to take on greater economic and national significance in *The Wanderer*; the focus on the domestic sphere in *Camilla* transmutes to the public sphere in *The Wanderer*. Consumption as a theme through which Fielding is able to play with genre convention in *Tom Jones* is revisited in Burney's works through her own genre adaptation, and again in Scott's popularisation of the historical novel; authors' awareness of their works as consumable objects and the intentionality of creating a financially successful work, comes through in their use of the theme of consumption. The benefits of a Smithian economic system in *Ennui* and *The Absentee* are challenged in *Rob Roy*. All of the novels under critique here use consumption as a way of discussing fears of the effects of consumption on British society; while this is initially seen in more distinctly moral and domestic terms, there is a shift after the publication of Smith's *Wealth of Nations* to viewing the effects of commerce and commercial society in more overtly economic terms where there is greater emphasis on the public sphere. There is no strict division between public and private in these novels, however. Though some focus more on one than the other, all contain both elements – excessive consumption in the domestic sphere has implications on the public and likewise, political issues of the public sphere ultimately have an effect on individuals in the private; the individual comes to represent the nation and the nation implicates the individual. The wider political implications of consumption present in some of these novels – colonial relations in *Humphry Clinker*, the effects of productive or unproductive estates and landlords in *The Absentee*, *Ennui*, and *Castle Rackrent* as well as *Humphry Clinker*, the revaluation of labour and commercial society as a whole in *The Wanderer* and *Rob Roy* – are also present in the more domestically-oriented novels as well – the figurative sexual consumption of and by Tom Jones, the effects of debt on Sir Hugh's estate in *Camilla*, gender role reversal on the Baynard estate in *Humphry Clinker*. Consumption, then, cannot be pigeon-holed into

domestic or public in its effects or implications; it is not just an individual act but one that affects society as a collective, with direct or indirect consequences to the nation.

This project has also attempted to link genre development to consumption, most specifically to the book as commodity. The novel's status as a consumable commodity is linked to the authors' need to profit and live by their production; genre innovation and development stems from the author's need to attract and sustain consumers with something new. In *The Economy of Character* Lynch argues for "the changing ways in which British men and women in the long eighteenth century accommodated themselves to their increasingly commercial society" (1). Rather than an accommodation, I find more instances of retreat from and protest against commercial society than willing acceptance of it. The authors and their creation of commodities bear this out – in Fielding's struggle against popular forms of fiction while courting financial and critical success, and Burney's financial need in *Camilla*'s creation at odds with her desire to produce more than just another romance; creative freedom and expression is impeded by economic necessity and the requirement of engaging with the commercial world in order to bring the creative work to life.

As a further offering to the ever-evolving field of consumption studies, this project has hopefully offered innovative readings and interpretations of the ways in which the changing representations of consumption in novels of the long eighteenth century help us to better understand the development of the genre.

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